

Gender Awareness in Language Education

Newsletter of the GALE Special Interest Group (SIG) of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)



GALE NEWSLETTER
Vol. 4:3 Fall, 2002
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Gender, human rights, peace, ecology: PGL Conference sparks interdisciplinary dialogs

By Tina Ottman

The highly successful first annual GALE-sponsored Peace as a Global Language conference (PGL1) took place on September, 28-29th 2002 at Daito Bunka Kaikan in Tokyo, dedicated to starting a dialogue among diverse groups on the themes of peace, human rights and environmental issues in the educational environment and beyond.

The concept for the event emerged from a mini-conference in which GALE and WELL (Women Educators and Language Learners) participated in 2001. WELL was one of the co-sponsors/supporters of PGL1, alongside JALT SIGs GILE (Global Issues in Language Education), PALE (Professionalism, Administration and Leadership in Education) and other groups including JEE (Japan Environmental Exchange), AIDS education NGO JAPANetwork, GCPEJ (The Hague Appeal for Peace/Global Campaign for Peace Education Japan), JEP (the Journal of Engaged Pedagogy), Shin Eiken (New English Teachers' Association) and the Japan Greens Party. Planning for PGL2 is already underway.

The proceedings of PGL1 will be available on CD ROM. It will feature both material in Japanese and English and be dual-formatted (readable on both MacIntosh and Windows computers). To order a copy of the CD-ROM, simply send 1,000 yen to Tim Newfields at this address: Midorigaoka Mansion #107, Midorigaoka 23, Yatomi-cho, Mizuho-ku, Nagoya-shi, Aichi-ken 467-0031.

Reports of some PGL presentations begin on page 5 .

PGL2 will be held September 27, and 28, 2003

Venue: Seisen University, 3-16-21 Higashi Gotanda, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo (141-8642), Japan. A website is under construction: <http://www.elcalendar.comPGL2003>

For further inquiries, contact: Kikuchi Keiko <kikuchik@tiu.ac.jp>

JALT Shizuoka 2002: CALLING ALL MEMBERS

Saturday 17:30-17:55 GALE AGM Room 908

* Please make a special effort to attend our REALLY concise GALE SIG Annual General Meeting. It's a vital chance to get together with other members and to have your input on future plans, fresh directions, new officers and budget issues in GALE! Only 25 minutes of your time--not too much to spare! *And why not join us all for dinner afterwards? (Details available from the GALE desk during the conference.)*

What is the purpose of the GALE SIG?

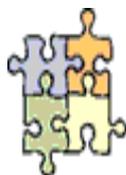
√ To research gender and its implications for language learning, teaching, and training, such as differences in discourse styles, preferred teaching and learning styles, interests, needs, motivation, aptitude, achievement, classroom interactions, same-sex versus coeducational classrooms and same-sex vs. opposite-sex teaching, and social identity.

To improve pedagogical practices, develop language teaching materials, and provide a clearinghouse for materials inclusive of gender and gender-related topics in FL subject areas such as communication, history, literature, linguistics, science, sociology, cultural studies, etc.

√ To raise awareness of workplace and

human rights issues related to gender for language professionals, such as discrimination, harassment, and violence based on gender and sexual orientation, and discrimination on the basis of marital or parental status, and to provide information for countering such discrimination.

√ To increase networking opportunities among language professionals interested in teaching, researching, and/or discussing issues related to gender and language education, such as biological sex, gender identity, gendered language, sexual orientation, gender behavior, gender roles, and gender socialization.



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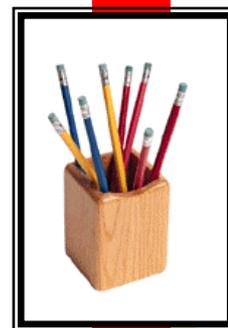
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JALT 2002 GENDER-FOCUSED PRESENTATIONS

Look out for these presentations on gender and critical pedagogy-related themes at JALT2002:

. Forum: Engaged Pedagogy in Japan
Saturday 23rd November, 13:15 - 14:35
Room 908

Summary: This forum will present bell hooks' concept of engaged pedagogy, and some of its applications for the teaching/learning process in the Japanese context. There will also be a discussion featuring the new international *Journal of Engaged Pedagogy*.

Presenters: Cheryl Martens (Hiroshima Kokusai Gakuin University) will discuss what it mean to be an engaged learner. Jane Joritz Nakagawa (Tsukuba University of Library and Information Science) will talk about the applications of EP in the Japanese context. Diane Nagatomo (Ochanomizu University) will discuss the founding and editing of the *Journal of Engaged Pedagogy*.

. Workshop: Women's Issues in Japan
Saturday 23rd November, 16:35 - 17:20
Room 908

Summary: "Women's Issues in Japan" is the title of a course the presenter has developed and has been teaching for the past 2 years to university English majors. During this workshop, she will share student-centered approaches to teaching about violence against women, women's reproductive health and women's images in the media. Included in this presentation are students' culminating video presentations, which comment on a section of the course, and required community volunteer reports.

Presenter: Beth Barry (Kanda University of International Studies)

. Presentation: Pragmatic responses - Different outcomes

Sunday 24th November, 13:15 - 16:05 Room 1001-1

Summary: Even with the best of intentions it is still possible for failed interactions. A study was made exploring critical factors which can determine success. A comparison

was made between two interactions, one of which was rated by the Japanese female interlocutor as positive and the other, negative despite the fact that both non-Japanese males were equally positive in terms of politeness, cultural sensitivity and communicative competence. Linguistic, pragmatic and cultural elements will be examined.

Presenter: Fujimoto, Donna (Kobe University of Commerce)

Workshop: Three Dimensions of Cultural Identity

Sunday 24th November, 15:40 - 16:05 Room 903

Short summary: This workshop will explore a conceptual framework for understanding similarities and differences across cultures, by addressing the three dimensions of cultural identity: human universals, group associations (national, ethnic, religious and other affiliations, including membership in multiple groups); and individual experience. Implications of this model for teaching language and intercultural communication will also be discussed.

Presenter: Charles Kowalski (Tokai University)

Demonstration: Tellable Tales

Saturday 23rd November, 14:45 -15:30
Room 908

Summary: This demonstration explains how to use folk tales to engage students in gender related issues. By focusing on the theme of Women as Saviors, it proposes how to incorporate the four skills while raising student's awareness level. It explains how to find suitable sources, what criteria to use when evaluating the sources, possible organizing principles, and information regarding the level of each source, time requirement and assessment methods. It demonstrates a variety of classroom activities.

Presenter Li, Lisa Y.H. (Obirin University)

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EPA Journal Creators Form Engaged Pedagogy Association

Yes, it's official – after a year of email list discussion the Engaged Pedagogy Association (EPA) has now been formed (see the message from its new president GALE/WELL member Barbara Summerhawk below).

EPA is an association of teachers and learners of languages or language-related disciplines that promotes research, presentations, writing, reading, and discussion, and describes its mandate as:

1. taking into consideration gendered, feminist, queer, class, race, critical, women's, and spiritual perspectives,
2. clearly including the writer in the writing as an engaged spiritual and physical being;
3. looking at teaching, learning, education, and related research and theory holistically,
4. making connections between disciplines and between teachers' and students' work (examples include writers from different backgrounds and disciplines)
5. collaborating and commenting on each other's work, or on teacher/student collaborative work, and engaged in "praxis", or reflection upon teaching, learning, theory and research for the purpose of taking action or creating change.

The officers of EPA 2002 are: Barbara Summerhawk, President (barbara@ic.daito.ac.jp), Cheiron McMahill, Managing Editor, Issue 2 of *The Journal of Engaged Pedagogy* (csmcmahill@yahoo.co.jp), Keiko Kikuchi: Membership Chair (kikuchik@tiu.ac.jp), Paul Arenson, On-line Journal Manager (paul@tokyoprogressive.org) Reiko Yoshihara, Treasurer (rei0225@swu.ac.jp), Diane Nagatomo, Editor in Chief, Issue 2 of *The Journal of Engaged Pedagogy*, and Email list manager (dianenagatomo@m2.pbc.ne.jp), Marie Wilson Nelson, Editor in Chief, Issue 3 of *The Journal of Engaged Pedagogy*, (mnelson@nl.edu), plus a supporting staff of dozens ... Please volunteer, anyone who would like to join the editorial board!

Check out:

EngagedPedagogyAssociation@yahoogroups.com).

Message from the EPA President:

Welcome everyone to the new Engaged Pedagogy Association:

Our group includes teachers, translators, students, and people bringing eclectic lifestyles from all over the world. We share a common vision that teaching and learning are constantly interchanging processes, that

we can use our study for not just communication but as a tool of resisting illegitimate authority. Borrowing from feminist pedagogue bell hooks, we are teaching in from the margins and will soon meet to define a new middle, a more tolerant, diverse mainstream that flows into the ocean of peace and respect. We are creating a new biocracy and hope all of you will join us in the construction.

EPA publishes a journal, *The Journal of Engaged Pedagogy* and is one of the sponsors of the Peace as a Global Language II Conference. We wish to work together with other groups whose purpose is similar to ours in the interest of raising consciousness, changing educational themes and methods and building a community of practice around our common goals. See you in the discussion room! --Barbara Summerhawk

Call for Submissions:

The *Journal of Engaged Pedagogy* invites submissions for Volume III, to be published in the fall of 2003, though online publication may occur earlier. We seek reader-friendly pieces related to responsive teaching in the EFL/ESL classroom. Manuscripts should integrate theory and practice and make implications for teaching clear.

The journal aspires to articulate a new professionalism, one that integrates personal, professional, cultural and political values and engages whole learners and whole teachers. Infusing personal values, growth and integrity into the workplace, it makes room for the personal parts of professional stories, advocating reflective practices that motivate us to grow, and shining light on the shadows where solutions to problems hide, and showing (rather than merely talking about) how to facilitate success for every learner in our classrooms. .

Send submissions (in Microsoft Word) and queries to Marie Wilson Nelson, Editor, National-Louis University, Tampa Campus
<mnelson@nl.edu>. *****

PGL Conference Reports cont'd from P.1

Following are reports of three workshops held at the PGL Conference.

Peace Begins in the Classroom

Tina Ottman

Taking place on the first day of the *Peace as a Global Language* conference, Andrew Finch's non-episodic workshop opened in carousel fashion as a packed room of highly engaged participants reacted in changing pairs to differing numbers of statements/quotations that figure high in the 2000-2001 president of KOTESOL's agenda, such as "teachers are agents of social change", "teachers need to teach according to their beliefs", "Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war," "Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe".



Currently KOTESOL head of research and Professor of English Education at Kyungpook National University in Daegu, Republic of Korea, Andrew Finch conducted his workshop in a characteristic, holistic, task-based "all participants talking all of the time" classroom environment.

Pairs or groups of participants completed and discussed a series of worksheets, samples of which are given below and can be found on the presenter's website <http://www.finchpark.com/>. (To view a copy of Andrew Finch's paper *Peace Begins in the Classroom*, including the appendices below, see <http://www.finchpark.com/arts/peace/entre.htm>.)

Some of the worksheets, such as "Peace in the classroom Reflective Needs Analysis" are directed at teachers; others, for example "Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale" are aimed at students, and particularly reflect Finch's 'peace in,

peace out' philosophy, which postulates that for effective language learning to take place, there needs to be peace within the classroom, mutual respect and learner autonomy.

Further worksheets offer a learners' contract, and suggest activities to de-stress students, to build students' appreciation of themselves, for example an activity highly reminiscent of Reevaluative/Reconstructive Counselling, "I love myself even when ..."

(Students paste a photograph of themselves on a sheet of paper; using both sides of a paper, then write/draw qualities about themselves – appearance, personality, talents - that they like, and don't like, in order to "experience loving themselves unconditionally by distinguishing between (1) who they *are* and (2) what they *do* or *have* ... they acknowledge themselves for all the things they like about themselves. Then they consider what they don't like and find ways to accept themselves anyway.")

The workshop concluded in typical, non-interventional, non-schedule-driven fashion, with colleagues and friends "calling time," rather than have participants' essential autonomy limited by the traditional central 'authority figure' of the educator/presenter.

Life Link: Students Exchange Ideas on Peace, Environment and Human Rights

Hiroko Sato

Life-Link is a global friendship network for 12-18 year olds studying in high schools. The network, which began in 1988 in Sweden with the aim of "building a peaceful earth for humans", gives students from about 50 countries a space to expand friendships,

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PGL Conference report: Life-link cont'd from P. 5

and to discuss global problems. At a PGLI workshop presentation on Saturday, September 28th, three Japanese participants talked about their activities in Life-Link.

Ryoko Yamaguchi, a teacher at Doshisha High School, had previously attended an annual Life-Link conference in Sigtuna, Sweden, and talked about four students Yuka Kato, Ayano Sakurai, Yuri Ito, and Tomomi Koto, who participated in 1999.

The students presented their activities at school, such as making a children's peace monument in Tokyo after studying the book *Peace Cranes*, which is an account of Sadako, a young female A-bomb victim. According to Yamaguchi, Sadako's story and the children's peace monument moved children in New Mexico, the American state where the A-bomb was originally produced, and they too began to make their own peace monument.

In addition, children in Japan made a second children's monument in Tokyo and they also began a campaign to make a further monument in Kyoto.

Finally, Yamaguchi recounted how the four participants delivered booklets on Article Nine of the Constitution of Japan, and performed a play, *Let's Save Our Earth*, dealing with environmental problems. They exchanged their activities and learned a lot at the Swedish conference.

Shigemitsu Ahara, an instructor at Hosei University, accompanied two college students, Yuki Otsuji and Kaori Ikeda, to the Life-Link conference in Sweden in 2001. He described Sweden as the real center of human rights education "because parents, teachers and politicians cooperate in making improvements the education system". A characteristic feature of Sweden's educational system is that the same teacher will teach the same students for 10 years, and plays a vital part in nurturing, students' potential.

Thus Ahara described Life-Link as being "naturally born" in Sweden. "Life-link connects schools in the world, so it is wonderful to exchange opinions and share the experience among them."

Japanese students, said Ahara, found it difficult to express their opinions during the conference. He conceded that despite the language problem, and the difficulty of speaking in English, it was more important to have a strong motivation to express ideas and to communicate those ideas to others.

The majority of the participants of Life-Link's Swedish conferences were Europeans. In Asia, Ahara declared, Japan should take an active role in promoting Life-Link and expanding it in Asian countries.

Kazuaki Sekine, an instructor at Chichibu High School, supported the campaign to make a scale model of the atomic bomb dome in Hiroshima. A disabled student in Chichibu High School had been so shocked by learning about the damage incurred by the atomic bomb that he had been moved to express his feelings to other people. The members of the school's astronomy club decided to make a scale model of the dome by from polystyrene and wood. After eight or nine attempts, they were successful in reconstructing the dome, and were completely engaged by watching the dome take shape. They also had time to reflect on the atomic bomb and the damage which it had caused, and to consider how to make a more peaceful world. The teachers and students thought of Life-Link, and they produced a brochure on the making of the scale model of the atomic bomb dome and sent it to the organization. The dome has been built in many other places since then, and with many different materials: with bricks in Turkey, with corrugated cardboard and

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"Life-link connects schools in the world,so it is wonderful to exchange opinions and share the experience among them.."

PGL Workshop Reports (Cont'd from p. 6)

wood in Sri Lanka, Zambia, and in Morocco. During a Peace Festival in Russia, Russian and Japanese students also recreated the atomic bomb dome.

In 2001, Japanese students visited the Czech Republic and learned about an atrocity which took place in an asylum during World War II, where 600 people were packed in very small space and many cruel incidents took place. Japanese students made a scale model of the asylum together with 600 model figures of inmates for display in a school festival.

Sekine also concluded that Japanese students could be major activists in Life-Link in Asia, and should invite Asian countries to join Life-Link and expand its network.

GALE member Hiroko Sato is a full-time English teacher at Chiba Prefecture, s Ichinomiya Commercial High School, a public high school in Japan.

Sexual identity subject positioning

Tina Ottman

Round-table participants shared a lively exchange of the challenges they have faced as educators in their attempts to present LGBT issues during **Roibeard O'Mochain's** presentation of his research on **Sexual identity subject positioning** on the first day of the *Peace as a Global Language* conference.

O'Mochain opened his presentation with a description of his ongoing doctoral research project, started a year ago, for which he is still seeking subjects. Currently the project includes around 10 resource participants and six focus participants, all resident in Japan but drawn from a range of cultures

(Japanese, Filipino, North American, etc.). Most of the participants, either educators or students, have experienced subject positioning and stigmatization as a result of their sexuality or perceived sexuality.

For those of us less familiar with the tenets of Queer Theory (QT), O'Mochain offered a dynamic explanation of its central ideas, together with its critical ties to Derridaean post-structuralist questioning of the "binary heterosexual/homosexual model" of society.

Referring to Derrida's deconstruction of "binary conceptual structures", this yin-yang polarization of essences is, he posited, not only limiting, but also prey to the tyranny or "hegemony" of categories. We are all either subject-positioned, (categorized by others) as gay, or straight, etc.; moreover, within this conception, we all seek to uncover our "true self" (presumably a fixed, permanent collection of traits/desires).

Yet, paraphrasing QT protagonist and *Gender Trouble* author Judith Butler, O'Mochain maintains "there are no essences glued to the self": We are all constantly changing, and we relate differently to different people. Our selfhood is therefore fluid and dynamic. Likewise, Queer Theory represents gender and sexuality as complex, fluid, and non-homogenous, and above all, non-binary.

The presenter referred to Aneta Pavlenko's controversial statement in her *JALT Language Teacher* interview (02.25. 2001): "There are no men and women." Apart from general biological makeup, there are no general characteristics that all men and all women share. Oftentimes, men and women of a particular social class, cultural group or ethnicity would have more commonalities than differences.

O'Mochain stressed that he preferred not to frame his study in terms of desire, but rather to focus on the pragmatic approach needed in
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PGL Workshop: Sexual Identity (contin'd from p. 7)

education, particularly in the case of young, isolated students who are discovering their identity.

Normalizing practices have substantial implications in the education of students and the situation of teachers: do we want to choose the mainstream "ethnic" approach of celebrating diversity, or should we consider adopting a more fluid poststructuralist /QT approach?

In a situation of inequality, the dilemma for the educator, according to O'Mochain, is: How do I not reinforce: binary logic"? How should I not present a model of "normal

queer" when I wish learners to understand, "Hey, I'm normal too"?

When asked to give practical examples from his own experience as an educator, he acknowledged that he was primarily interested in research and theory, but offered suggestions such as using segments from Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut*; and from the hit American TV series *Seinfeld*, particularly focusing on Jerry Seinfeld's relationship with his friends.

O'Mochain concluded that he hoped this would be a debate for everyone, not only gay people. *****

JALT2002 Presentation Preview cont'd from p. 3

Workshop: Value Based Education in the EFL Classroom

*Saturday 23rd November, 10:00 - 10:45
Room 906*

Summary: This presentation focuses on the results of my class study in value-based education in a first year Humanities Seminar, "Women in Myth" at Aichi Gakuin University. The course had the goal of helping students learn about virtues and values through reading myths and folktales from around the world.

Presenter: Jane Lightburn (Aichi Gakuin University)

Presentation: Creative works to prompt discussion of global issues

Saturday 10:00 - 12:15 Room 910

Summary: Poetry, fiction, songs and personal essays give a human "face" to social and world issues. Each work to be demonstrated by the presenter introduces a global issue such as environmental preservation, racism, violence, peace, materialism, and gender inequality, and can be used as a springboard for discussion or writing as well as for reading/listening

practice. **Presenter:** Jane Nakagawa (Tsukuba University of Library and Information Science)

Presentation: The Images of the Women Expressed in Textbooks

Saturday 15:40 -16:05 Room 908

In analyzing the images of the women in the literature expressed in English textbooks through postmodern feminism, the presenter will raise questions: how the woman is described, why the woman dies or is gone, and so on. The way to improve the contents will be shown based on the concept that the location of women can change beyond the boundary of cultural construction.

Presenter: Nakamura, Nobuko (Aichi Institute of Technology)

GALE is on the Web!

See us at:

[http://members.tripod.co.jp/gender__
lang__ed](http://members.tripod.co.jp/gender__lang__ed)

Independence through English: A Reflective Analysis

Michael Lee Harper

During 1999 and 2000 I had the unusual privilege to work in quite unique environment—in a domestic violence shelter in Tampa, Florida, in the U.S. Tampa is home to a large non-English-speaking community. Statistics for cases of domestic violence in the Hillsborough County area are also alarmingly high. A colleague of mine in the Masters program in Linguistics, Beth Ellen Holimon, wrote and applied for a federal government grant for her curriculum planning class. She and a partner researched the plight of abused women in Hillsborough County in order to create this grant. She was awarded a sum of money to head a one-year adult ESL program at the Spring of Tampa Bay Inc., created especially for these survivors of domestic violence. Holimon's undergraduate degree is in Women's Studies, and her MA is in Applied Linguistics. She convinced me, without trepidation, to come on board and help make the program successful. I was hired as an instructor, although I myself had had no prior domestic violence training. I was being recruited for my ESL teaching experience and ability. The year that followed was tumultuous, to say the least. Half way through the program, I became the project coordinator and had the first-time experience of interviewing ESL instructors and hiring my replacement. This article speaks to all ESL teachers regardless of exposure (or, hopefully, lack thereof) to domestic violence. Topics such as classroom logistics and contingency lesson plans and reworking entire curricula are discussed here. I will attempt to discuss the life of the grant, including its successes and weaknesses, and to decide if the grant should be maintained and, if so, how it should be revised for the future.

Introduction

In their article, *Breaking the Language Barrier: A Rationale for Shelter-based English Programs*, Holimon and Wynn (1999) assert that the goal of shelter-based English programs is “for shelters across the country to provide women with the tools needed to function outside the shelter, help them gain confidence as learners and teachers, and engage in a critical awareness

that leads to action.” With this goal in mind, Holimon and Wynn created *Independence Through English*¹, a program designed to be implemented at The Spring of Tampa Bay Inc., in Florida, on October 1, 1999. This article attempts to discuss the life of the grant, including its successes and weaknesses, and to decide if the grant should be maintained and, if so, how it should be revised for the future.

The Spring of Tampa Bay, Inc.

The Spring of Tampa Bay, Inc. is the sole-source certified provider of domestic violence services in Hillsborough County, Florida. The Spring, providing refuge for one of every eight victims in the state, is the busiest of Florida's 39 shelter programs. Among a list of many other services, The Spring offers confidential 24-hour telephone crisis intervention, on-site public school for K-12 students, local education programs for refugee victims, evening educational groups and child care, and post-shelter case management and follow-up. Aftercare services include transitional, single-family apartments; weekly counseling appointments and life skills programs; vocational education counselor for training and job placement; and permanent housing assistance. Admission to Aftercare is limited to clients who elect post-secondary education or training for high-wage enrollment jobs. For the fiscal year 2000-2001 the ethnicity of Spring clients was 49% Caucasian, 24% Hispanic, 23% African-American, 2% Native American, 2% Other, and 1% Asian.²

Goals

One major goal of the grant stated that “80% of program participants will show increased levels of English language proficiency.” According to Gass and Selinker (1994) “some linguists (e.g. Becker, 1991) suggest that second language learning is much more an accomplishment of memory for text than of the analysis of text. That is, much more is memorized than is broken into parts and subjected to rules and/or generalizations (p. 247). Our clients exhibited difficulty in memorizing simple text and recalling lessons from the previous class. Herman (1997) posits that “traumatic events produce profound and lasting changes in

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Independence through English cont'd from p. 9

in physiological arousal, emotion, cognition and memory. Moreover, traumatic events may sever these normally integrated functions from one another" (p. 34). Because the majority of students moved on to find jobs, further research is recommended to study the effects on cognition and memory in victims of domestic violence.

Another goal attempted to quantify how many limited English Proficiency (LEP) students would reduce the number of client days spent in shelter. This objective proved to be an invalid measure of successful outcome based on many variables involved in the length of a client's stay at the shelter. These variables include, but are not limited to: 1) legal difficulties and the speed of the courts, 2) level of English proficiency, 3) level of education in native language, 4) degree of physical injury, 5) monetary and emotional resources outside the shelter. Variables two and three are mentioned again in the next paragraph.

A third goal anticipated that "10% of shelter and follow-up clients participating in the program will be equipped to take a GED preparation course." This was also quantitatively immeasurable due to the varied educational and English proficiency levels of the students. The vast majority of the clients were at True Beginner level in English and have had very low level reading skills in their native language. Most of them would not be ready to take the GED until they had spent at least one year in an Intensive English program. The remainder, who were ready to take the GED, moved on to jobs and discontinued taking classes because of personal and/or work obligations.

Attendance and other non-ESL problems

The grant was designed for classes to be conducted in two different locations: on the shelter premises for clients who lived there, and an off-site classroom for clients who, as yet, had not checked into the Spring and still lived in their own home, usually still with the perpetrator. Because of court appointments and many other reasons, attendance was usually quite low in both locations, especially the off-site class³. Due to this low attendance, the project coordinator decided to try to move the class to another shelter location where more ESL clients could be reached with more ease.

The adult education office offered to share space in their office located in an area with access to many migrant workers with a possibility of increasing enrollment, and he seemed eager to share his space with our clients. As in any bureaucracy, we were given many different names of individuals who would be in charge and be able to help us with the particulars of moving our site.

Things were set until someone realized that we would be conducting childcare during the ESL classes. One man in charge of the adult education site called to say that he was having second thoughts about having the children of the clients on-site. Someone else "in charge" approved the childcare situation since a cap of five students had been placed on the arrangement. However, a week later she called again to say that her supervisor had issues with the children being there.

Phone calls were made searching for appropriate, qualified childcare professionals to no avail. During Cindy Hewett's entire tenure as Project Coordinator, she worked part-time tending to the children while classes were being conducted, thus compromising her ability to fulfill other grant obligations.

Implications

I was hired as one of two English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors to work on this grant. My first concern was that I knew nothing about domestic violence. I was assured that I would be trained sufficiently. Upon arrival for my training, I was shown a video introducing me to the world of a domestic violence victim and what Florida law requires of employees in the field. I was trained at university to understand language and the learning process.

This training primarily applied to pedagogy and very little to social issues that would hinder the acquisition of a second language such as domestic violence. I contend that in order for an ESL program to be successful, instructors need more sensitivity training in domestic violence. Isserlis (1998) offers many suggestions to teachers for making the classroom a safer environment for victims of domestic violence. (continued next page)

Independence through English: A Reflective Analysis

Michael Lee Harper

During 1999 and 2000 I had the unusual privilege to work in quite unique environment—in a domestic violence shelter in Tampa, Florida, in the U.S. Tampa is home to a large non-English-speaking community. Statistics for cases of domestic violence in the Hillsborough County area are also alarmingly high. A colleague of mine in the Masters program in Linguistics, Beth Ellen Holimon, wrote and applied for a federal government grant for her curriculum planning class. She and a partner researched the plight of abused women in Hillsborough County in order to create this grant. She was awarded a sum of money to head a one-year adult ESL program at the Spring of Tampa Bay Inc., created especially for these survivors of domestic violence. Holimon's undergraduate degree is in Women's Studies, and her MA is in Applied Linguistics. She convinced me, without trepidation, to come on board and help make the program successful. I was hired as an instructor, although I myself had had no prior domestic violence training. I was being recruited for my ESL teaching experience and ability. The year that followed was tumultuous, to say the least. Half way through the program, I became the project coordinator and had the first-time experience of interviewing ESL instructors and hiring my replacement. This article speaks to all ESL teachers regardless of exposure (or, hopefully, lack thereof) to domestic violence. Topics such as classroom logistics and contingency lesson plans and reworking entire curricula are discussed here. I will attempt to discuss the life of the grant, including its successes and weaknesses, and to decide if the grant should be maintained and, if so, how it should be revised for the future.

Introduction

In their article, *Breaking the Language Barrier: A Rationale for Shelter-based English Programs*, Holimon and Wynn (1999) assert that the goal of shelter-based English programs is “for shelters across the country to provide women with the tools needed to function outside the shelter, help them gain confidence as learners and teachers, and engage in a critical awareness that leads to action.” With this goal in mind, Holimon and Wynn created *Independence Through English*¹, a program designed to be implemented at The Spring of Tampa Bay Inc., in Florida, on October 1, 1999. This article attempts to discuss the life of the grant, including its successes and weaknesses, and to decide if the grant should be maintained and, if so, how it should be revised for the future.

The Spring of Tampa Bay, Inc.

The Spring of Tampa Bay, Inc. is the sole-source certified provider of domestic violence services in Hillsborough County, Florida. The Spring, providing refuge for one of every eight victims in the state, is the busiest of Florida's 39 shelter programs. Among a list of many other services, The Spring offers confidential 24-hour telephone crisis intervention, on-site public school for K-12 students, local education programs for refugee victims, evening educational groups and child care, and post-shelter case management and follow-up. Aftercare services include transitional, single-family apartments; weekly counseling appointments and life skills programs; vocational education counselor for training and job placement; and permanent housing assistance. Admission to Aftercare is limited to clients who elect post-secondary education or training for high-wage enrollment jobs. For the fiscal year 2000-2001 the ethnicity of Spring clients was 49% Caucasian, 24% Hispanic, 23% African-American, 2% Native American, 2% Other, and 1% Asian.²

Goals

One major goal of the grant stated that “80% of program participants will show increased levels of English language proficiency.” According to Gass and Selinker (1994) “some linguists (e.g. Becker, 1991) suggest that second language learning is much more an accomplishment of memory for text than of the analysis of text. (continued next page)

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That is, much more is memorized than is broken into parts and subjected to rules and/or generalizations (p. 247). Our clients exhibited difficulty in memorizing simple text and recalling lessons from the previous class. Herman (1997) posits that “traumatic events produce profound and lasting changes in physiological arousal, emotion, cognition and memory. Moreover, traumatic events may sever these normally integrated functions from one another” (p. 34). Because the majority of students moved on to find jobs, further research is recommended to study the effects on cognition and memory in victims of domestic violence. Another goal attempted to quantify how many limited English Proficiency (LEP) students would reduce the number of client days spent in shelter. This objective proved to be an invalid measure of successful outcome based on many variables involved in the length of a client’s stay at the shelter. These variables include, but are not limited to: 1) legal difficulties and the speed of the courts, 2) level of English proficiency, 3) level of education in native language, 4) degree of physical injury, 5) monetary and emotional resources outside the shelter. Variables two and three are mentioned again in the next paragraph. A third goal anticipated that “10% of shelter and follow-up clients participating in the program will be equipped to take a GED preparation course.” This was also quantitatively immeasurable due to the varied educational and English proficiency levels of the students. The vast majority of the clients were at True Beginner level in English and have had very low level reading skills in their native language. Most of them would not be ready to take the GED until they had spent at least one year in an Intensive English program. The remainder, who were ready to take the GED, moved on to jobs and discontinued taking classes because of personal and/or work obligations.

Attendance and other non-ESL problems

The grant was designed for classes to be conducted in two different locations: on the shelter premises for clients who lived there, and an off-site classroom for clients who, as yet, had not checked into the Spring and still lived in their own home, usually still with the perpetrator. Because of court appointments and many other reasons, attendance was usually quite low in both locations, especially the off-site class³. Due to this low attendance, the project coordinator decided to try to move the class to another shelter location where more ESL clients could be reached with more ease. The adult education office offered to share space in their office located in an area with access to many migrant workers with a possibility of increasing enrollment, and he seemed eager to share his space with our clients. As in any bureaucracy, we were given many different names of individuals who would be in charge and be able to help us with the particulars of moving our site.

Things were set until someone realized that we would be conducting childcare during the ESL classes. One man in charge of the adult education site called to say that he was having second thoughts about having the children of the clients on-site. Someone else “in charge” approved the childcare situation since a cap of five students had been placed on the arrangement. However, a week later she called again to say that her supervisor had issues with the children being there. Phone calls were made searching for appropriate, qualified childcare professionals to no avail. During Cindy Hewett’s entire tenure as Project Coordinator, she worked part-time tending to the children while classes were being conducted, thus compromising her ability to fulfill other grant obligations.

Implications

I was hired as one of two English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors to work on this I was assured that I would be trained sufficiently. Upon arrival for my training, I was shown a video introducing me to the world of a domestic violence victim and what Florida law requires of employees in the field. I was trained at university to understand language and the learning grant. My first concern was that I knew nothing about domestic violence. I was assured that I would be trained sufficiently. Upon arrival for my training, I was shown a video introducing me to the world of a domestic violence victim and what Florida law requires of employees in the field. I was trained at university to understand language and the learning process. (cont’d)

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This training primarily applied to pedagogy and very little to social issues that would hinder the acquisition of a second language such as domestic violence. I contend that in order for an ESL program to be successful, instructors need more sensitivity training in domestic violence. Isserlis (1998) offers many suggestions to teachers for making the classroom a safer environment for victims of domestic violence. She suggests that teachers "allow [the students'] concerns about violence to surface in one form or another, offer content and activities that allow learners to share as much or as little information about themselves as they want, allow learners to choose their own level of participation in classroom activities, [and] find out about community resources." If teachers are willing to allow this to happen in their classes, they must first be educated and trained in basic domestic violence issues in order, at the very least, to be able to refer the student to the appropriate source of help.

Curriculum Revision

Because of the low level of proficiency, the curriculum had to be revised. Abstract topics proved too difficult for the clients. Hewett and the instructors decided to focus on getting the clients caught up on the basics, such as health, emergencies, and interacting with teachers of their children. In a non-domestic violence situation, "learners with positive attitudes, who experience success, will have these attitudes reinforced. Similarly, learners' negative attitudes may be strengthened by lack of success" (Ellis 1994). As one can imagine, because of the very nature of the clients' situations, this opinion is only intensified. Due to this, the courses were designed around the students' language needs, speed of progress, and need for positive reinforcement. Hewett felt that the ultimate purpose of the grant was "to offer an invaluable tool to those clients in need of English language skills." The grant was a success in that improvements in English proficiency were noticed, as well as attitude and self-awareness. As this was a government-funded grant and measurements are necessary as proof of success, it was recommended that a counselor or psychologist be retained to help with a qualitative analysis. According to Clevia Perez, one of the instructors, (personal communication, March 20, 2002) "[certain areas of second language acquisition (SLA)] such as motivation ... made this grant successful. As a result of the clients' high motivation to live a better life, after they leave [the shelter], their English improved considerably; they were willing to become more acculturated and participate more in the English speaking [community]. Some of them wanted more than speaking fluency; they even wanted to improve their skills academically." So if one only takes into consideration quantifiable measures of success, it would prove difficult to claim that this grant was successful. However, taking into consideration anecdotal materials and non-domestic violence, strictly SLA-based qualitative analyses, the grant succeeded in creating a warm, inviting atmosphere where the clients felt safe to rise above their domestic problems for a two-hour class, and free to make mistakes without being laughed at, or told that they will never succeed. They attained a sense of self worth during these sessions. Occasionally, they even walked away with a smile.

References

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- Isserlis, J. (2000). "Trauma and the Adult English Language Learner". *ERIC Digest*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education and Center for Applied Linguistics.

¹This grant was funded by STOP Violence Against Women Office (VAWO).

²Information was taken from the Internet at <http://www.thespring.org/>.

³According to Maggie Ferlita (personal communication, March 20, 2002) of the Spring of Tampa Bay, Inc., ESL classes for these women must be treated differently than classes for children. Children have no other obligations besides learning. Women, especially mothers, must be able to provide for their families. However important learning to speak English may be, if the mother cannot provide food and shelter for her children, she feels unsuccessful. One suggestion has been to pay the students to attend class, as ESL education is a luxury in the lives of these women. This tactic has proven successful in migrant farm worker situations where the client would lose valuable work time and pay in order to attend ESL classes.

Michael Lee Harper is currently teaching English in the Department of Foreign Languages at Tokai University in Hiratsuka City, and at Tsuda Women's College in Tokyo, Japan.

WELL/GALE Mini-Conference set for July

Mark July 1 on your schedule for a combined WELL/GALE and (possibly) Daito Bunka University Sexual Harassment Prevention Committee mini conference, to be held in Tokyo. It will feature assertiveness training, a keynote speech by well-known scholar Michiyo Kano, and workshops on various themes. Please note that this conference will be in Japanese only. There will be no simultaneous interpretation, but the workshop leaders have been asked to prepare an outline in English. Language facilitators will also be on hand. The organizers urge you to please take advantage of this great learning opportunity regardless of your level of Japanese.

Date: July 1, 2001

Time: 9:30-5:45

Place: Daito Bunka Kaikan, near Tobu Nerima Station on the Tobu Tojo Line

Fee: a nominal conference fee will be charged

Information: Barbara Summerhawk (0424-67-3809) Mikiko Ishihara (0425-76-1297). Check the GALE website for further details.

Keynote speaker:

Mikiko Kano will be speaking on women and the war. Ms. Kano was born in

Seoul in 1940. Through the *Onnatachi no Genzai wo tou kai* association, she published ten volumes on the "History of the Homefront" between 1976 and 1994. Her recent book is on the 1970's era and the impact that time had on women.

Workshop sessions

Includes a preview of the NHK video on the international women's war tribunal held in Tokyo in December, 2000. Some participants have charged that an NHK report on that event was heavily censored, and a group of international scholars sent a protest to the station earlier this year. Workshop participants may watch and discuss the video and the possibility of future action against NHK.

Tentative Schedule

9:30: Registration opens

10-12: Assertiveness training

12:30-1:45: Keynote Address

2-2:30: Song Interlude (Mikiko Ishihara)

2-3: NHK Video preview, followed by discussion

2:45-4: Workshop Session 1 (Caitlen Stronell)

4:15-5:30: Workshop Session 2 (Jane Nakagawa, Mari Takenouchi)

5:30-5:45: Closing, Summary

DINNER

NEWS BRIEFS

Postgrad Conference in Belfast

Rethinking Gender and Power: A Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Conference will be held in Belfast, UK, Aug. 30-31 at Queen's University. Although the deadline for papers passed on April 30, more information is available from

Rethinking Gender and Power Conference, c/o School of Politics, Queen's University of Belfast, Belfast BT7 1PA Northern Ireland. Email: genderconference@hotmail.com
Call for Papers website: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/gender2001>

Call for Papers

A conference titled AsiaPacifiQueer 2: Media, Technology & Queer Cultures is scheduled at The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Dec. 3--4, 2001. APQ2 will explore how individuals are constructed as gendered and sexed beings in contemporary mediascapes. The conference will focus on how media and communications technologies in postcolonial Asia-Pacific and other societies produce, govern, market, distribute, enable or exclude minority genders and sexualities in both the public and private spheres. Please send 250-word abstracts by 1 July 2001 to: Mark McLelland at the Centre for Critical and Cultural Studies, the University of Queensland:

4072.m.mclelland@mailbox.uq.edu.au

Conference in Lancaster

The Department of Linguistics and Modern English Language at Lancaster University, UK will host IGALA2, the Second International Gender and Language Association Conference (formerly Berkeley Women and Language Conference). The dates are April 12-14, 2002. For details, including of registration, accommodation and submission of abstracts, see <<http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/groups/gal/igala2.htm>>

Green Network Begins

An International Green Network has been organized in Japan after a forum held in Tokyo in March. Three GALE members (Barbara Summerhawk, John McLaughlin, and Kathy Riley) participated in a panel discussion concerning women's and labor issues) at the daylong event sponsored by U.S. Greens Abroad. Individuals and groups are welcome to join the network, which is designed to bring together those who are working for a sustainable and socially just society, regardless of political party membership. Although the "Green

The GALE Newsletter is produced several times a year by the JALT N-SIG, Gender Awareness in Language Learning. We welcome comments, student and educator-produced articles. Send your contributions to Kathy Riley (rileykb@gol.com) or Louise Haynes (aidsed@gol.com) or by fax to (052)806-5534.

For enquiries, e-mail <igala2@lancs.ac.uk>. They invite 30-minute papers (20 minutes talk, 10 minutes questions), panel discussions, workshops and posters that deal with language in relation to gender. The conference is interdisciplinary. For more information about GALE members who may attend, contact Cheiron McMahill (see officers' list).

movement" is strongly associated with the environment, it includes gender and many other issues too. All groups are welcome, including those working on human rights, anti-globalization or peace/anti-war efforts, labor unions, women's and lesbian-gay-bi-transgender issues, and alternative businesses, arts, cultural or academic groups. The idea is to bring people together and increase knowledge and support for one another's efforts. A directory of members is in production. For more information, contact Richard Evanoff<evanoff@sipeb.aoyama.ac.jp>



JOIN US!

**Gender
Awareness in
Language
Education**

WELL Retreat 2003

The Women Educators and Language Learners' annual retreat will take place at the National Women's Educational Centre in Saitama, Japan, on January 24-26th, 2003. You can register on line at wellretreat@hotmail.com.)

Message from the organizer

Just to whet the appetites of all you Ready to Retreat types, here are a couple of offerings from our two English key speakers.

Beth King: "Confessions of a Recovering Retiree Wannabee"

"Confessions of a Recovering Retiree Wannabee" is a first-hand story of my burnout survival about 4 years ago. With 26 years of government service behind me, I flat out didn't want to go to work anymore. Using my own personal examples and applying the concepts to the educational arena, I try to inspire employees to make the "rest of their career - the best of their career."

Through Powerpoint examples and an incredible video, the women who attend the WELL Retreat will leave with hints and tips on how to use their own everyday creativity to bring that rosy glow back to their own personal career situation.

Caroline Pover: Making the Most of your Life in Japan

Based on her individual consultations and group workshops, Caroline Pover will assist participants in setting goals and establishing steps by which to achieve them. She will cover practical, physical, professional, educational, interpersonal, and emotional aspects of living in Japan as a woman. She will talk about her adventures in Japan, from first turning up six years ago on a tourist visa, to the challenges faced in publishing an independent women's magazine, to writing and self-publishing her bestselling book 'Being A Broad in Japan', to the establishment of Go Girls: an online teacher/student matching site and community for women. Her presentation aims to be informative and inspirational, and to encourage women to follow their dreams, whatever they may be.

Call for Papers: WELL Conference/Retreat

Deadline: November 30th, 2002

Notification by: December 15th, 2002

E-mail: Kay at wellretreat@hotmail.com

Mail Address: International Christian University ELP, Tokyo 181-8585, Mitaka city, Osawa 3-10-2 Phone: 0422-33-3683

This is a call for academic and creative papers, presentations, or workshops focusing on rejuvenating the body and mind in our changing world, especially in the workplace. Ideas might include: language teaching, women's studies, coping with stress, balancing family and work, healing, spirituality, effectiveness in the workplace, relationships, female power, career management, activism and any other suggestions related to the theme of "peace".