

Fresh Faces
Meet the Board 2012-2012

Revitalize
w/ the Professional Planner

Cut the Excess
Reduce Wordiness

The

LINK

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the

Summer Break Issue

Summer 2012

A Time for Refreshment

Submission Information

Find our current submission guidelines online at http://www.itbe.org/submission_guidelines.php

Snap shot of submission info:

- email to news@itbe.org
- subject line: "ITBE Newsletter Submission"
- article: Microsoft Word attachment only (.doc/.docx)
- APA citations/references
- 1 space between words & after punctuation
- Pictures embedded
- Ideas for regular columns are welcome
- Submitted by the deadline
- No Press Releases, Please

Quarterly Deadlines:

June 15 September 15 December 15 March 15

The editors reserve the right to modify any material selected for publication to fit the available space, or to improve on clarity and style. Authors will be consulted prior to publication if changes are deemed by the editors to be substantial.

The newsletter is a publication of Illinois Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages/Bilingual Education, a non-profit professional organization, founded in 1970, which disseminates information, provides a forum, and serves as an advocate for students, educators and administrators in the field. Illinois TESOL*BE is an affiliate of TESOL, an international organization. Membership in Illinois TESOL*BE is open to all interested individuals. To join, please visit our web site at http://www.itbe.org/join_itbe.php.

More about the newsletter at <http://www.itbe.org/newsletter.php>

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REDUCING WORDINESS, STRIVING FOR CONCISENESS IN WRITING

By Audrey Zenner, University of Illinois at Chicago.
from her UIC course packet for international graduate students, fall 2012

Contrary to writing methods you may have previously learned, American academic writing is neither flowery, nor wordy. We strive for concise text in a straightforward manner. Of course, this holds true for non-fiction writing. If and when you are asked to compose fiction, then you may have free reign with as many descriptive words you deem necessary.

In order to train yourself in this method of succinct writing, begin by free writing your paragraphs without worry of specific wording, punctuation, and spelling. Then, go back and proofread (read what you already have written) out loud to listen and read for potential modifications to tighten up the wording. By reading aloud, you are able to review your own writing using two strategies. At your level of education, proofreading is essential before submitting any written work.

First, one method of selecting replacement words and at the same time increasing your vocabulary is right clicking with the mouse on a given word when working in Word software. A drop-down menu will appear; click on *synonyms*, and a list of words with similar meanings will come into view. Easily replace the word by double clicking on your selection.

Second, you may reduce wordiness and continue smooth flow by replacing

nouns in subsequent sentences with demonstrative pronouns (this & these for close proximity and that & those for further proximity).

Examples:

An academic job may be complex to secure since more students are choosing to attend graduate school. *This* results in a very competitive job market.

This refers to job in the first sentence.

Academia offers much more than teaching, and *those* jobs may range from advisors, research, administration and student affairs just to name a few.

Those refer to academia in the first sentence.

Third, transform prepositional phrases to possessives.

Examples:

The daughter of Mr. Black is an instructor of English in the day school of the village. (17 words)

Mr. Black's daughter is an English instructor in the village's day school. (12 words)

Websites on the Internet compete for business from people throughout the world. (12 words)

Internet websites compete for people's global business. (7 words)

A letter from the editor

I've been the editor of the newsletter for a little over a year now. Over the past year, we've been able to expand our newsletter to a full-fledged magazine and properly renamed it *The ITBE Link*. We moved away from a paper publication to one that's fully online, full color and of ever growing length, with an average page length of at least 30 pages last year! If you write for us, you will be read. Our fall 2011 technology issue has been used in several TESOL classes and got rave reviews at the editor's workshop at TESOL. I instantly ran out of copies and was barraged with questions about our publication.

Affiliates were envious of the quality and quantity of the writing they saw in our publication. They wanted to know how I did it. That was easy; it was all of you, our readers, our writers, our editors and volunteers.

For this coming year I hope to focus on expanding- expanding our readership, our pool of writers and our reach. At TESOL I was approached by the editor for TESOL Greece, among others, about doing article exchanges. I hope we are able to do this this year. Imagine your article not only published here in Illinois but also in a highly sought after paper publication distributed abroad!

Our saturated market of ESL professionals in Illinois has blessed us with a network of talent and ideas that is hard to match. Our publication has begun reflecting this wealth and variety that you are a part of. Each of you, whether an experienced professional, a novice or a student, has a perspective, an idea or a talent that you can share through print with the rest of us. I encourage you to do so. Seek out our calls for submissions and submit early, and join a committee and put your ideas into action. It is only with the continued efforts of people just like you, your peers, your colleagues and indeed you yourself that this publication thrives.

Our membership is the primary readership for our publication. I hope to make access to *the LINK* easier for you and I think we have already begun doing so. At the request of many of our writers, I also make it easier for those outside our membership to gain access to your articles more quickly. There is a demand and this is something I'm willing to work on meeting. I'd also remind you that you, as an ITBE member, are allowed to share *the LINK* with others. This includes sending it to a colleague or assigning it to a class. We'd always love to know how you're using it.

ITBE's membership is made up of an impressive group of ESL professionals. Know that you are in good company and seek to entwine yourself in that community as more than a passive member. You've already begun by reading what you have before you. Continue by attending our workshops, investigating how you can contribute and getting involved. Writing for us or encouraging someone you know to write for us is a great way to start. Write once, or write every issue. Check out itbe.org for the latest call and submission guidelines. If you have flexibility and time during the two weeks after each deadline, join the editing committee and get your name on the staff page. Whatever your strengths or interests, there is a place for you to serve your larger profession at ITBE. And while there are many ways to contribute, I hope to see you in print!

Kelly Cunningham – Newsletter Editor

In the News

Elgin Community College

In mid-June, Elgin Community College hosted a Focal Skills Workshop with invited guest and Focal Skills Approach authority Dr. Ashley Hastings. The workshop brought educators from Illinois, Wisconsin and China together to share their experiences with the technique in an effort to expand and improve their programs.

Lincoln Land Community College was in the news!

WBEZ did a story on the influx of immigrants to Beardstown, Illinois to work in the Cargill pork-processing plant. Lincoln Land Community College holds ESL classes at the plant. To learn more, google: How immigrants learn English in rural America.

-Cathy McCabe, Adult Ed SIG Chair

Call for Submissions: The Technology Issue

The ITBE LINK

Deadline: September 15, 2012

Back by popular demand, this fall the ITBE Link will again publish a technology issue. By far our most popular issue, the technology issue brings together our collective knowledge and creativity to bring members the latest ideas on using technology in education, teaching and language learning. The 2011 issue has been required reading in several graduate level courses and we hope this year's issue will be just as helpful a resource. But to do that we need your help!

Write for the Technology Issue of the ITBE Link. We need your teaching ideas, reviews of your favorite websites, the best social networking for ESL/BE educators, social networking uses for students, a list of who to follow on twitter, great tech games for language learning, ideas and research in language learning and technology, programs you love, things you've done that have worked, interviews with people doing great things with technology and ESL, online learning and hybrid ideas, hidden secrets, tips and tricks. With all our ideas together, we can create a great resource and expand our knowledge and expertise together. Details at <http://www.itbe.org/newsletter.php>

Open Call for Submissions
The ITBE LINK- Winter Issue
Deadline: December 15

No Press Releases Please

The Road Ahead

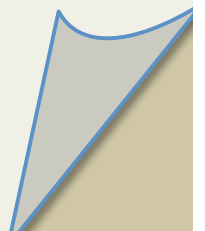
On behalf of the ITBE executive board, I extend a warm greeting to all of our members! My name is Gevik Anbarchian, and I am the incoming ITBE president for the 2012–2013 academic year, following in the footsteps of my outstanding mentor, Heather Torrie. I have just completed my thirteenth year of teaching at Niles Township High Schools, District 219 in Skokie. I have split my time over the years between our two schools, Niles West and Niles North, teaching ELL, reading and most recently English.

Aside from my teaching duties, I have enjoyed serving on the ITBE board for the past three years. My first year, I was a member of our Professional Development Committee (PDC), of which I became the chair my second year. This past year, I served as both Convention Chair and Vice President as I prepared for my role as president this year. In addition to my duties within Illinois, I was honored to travel to Washington, DC last summer for TESOL Advocacy Day, and this year I had the honor to travel to Philadelphia as our affiliate's official representative to the TESOL convention. I have learned so much from all of my colleagues in my various experiences these past three years. It has been both personally and professionally rewarding to meet so many people from around the country who support our profession in so many ways.

I am so happy that after a decade of teaching I finally ventured outside of my classroom and became involved in our wider profession. I encourage all of you who are thinking of getting involved to not wait as long as I did to do so—our profession needs you and you will not regret it! There is so much work to be done for the students, teachers and administrators we serve: academic, political and professional.

On this point, I hope you will make it a personal goal to be involved as much as possible this coming year in contributing to the growth of our profession through ITBE. First, I hope you will consider submitting an article to our recently renamed newsletter, ITBE Link, which, thanks to our steadfast editor, Kelly Cunningham, is now so much more than a newsletter. This is a great way to earn publishing credit for yourself as well as sharing your perspectives on teaching and the challenging issues we all face.

We are also in the process of planning professional development events for the coming year and would love to have your input and assistance. All ITBE members are welcome to serve on committees even if they are not board members. If you would like to be involved in the planning of one of our two annual workshops, we would gladly welcome you on the Professional Development Committee. And of course we need all the help we can get in organizing our 2013 convention, set for February 22–23 again at the Wyndham Lisle. Please contact our new Vice–President and 2013 Convention Chair, Dr. Miguel Fernandez, to get involved.



A message from the President (cont.)

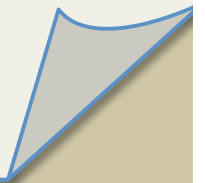
Furthermore, serving as a liaison between you and the board, your Special Interest Group (SIG) leaders need your help in identifying key topics and issues to be addressed at workshops and the convention as well as arranging speakers and presenters you would like to hear from.

I would also like to draw special attention to two new committees that surely can use your help. Our Advocacy Committee, only in its second year, needs vital input to keep up with the many political decisions affecting our various interests both locally and nationally. Our newly minted Long-term Planning Committee also needs your help as we look beyond the present and immediate future for ways that ITBE can serve our state more effectively down the road.

Contact me at president@itbe.org for more information about how to get involved. I feel strongly that there is so much potential for professional development and advocacy as we work together within ITBE. Please feel free to attend our monthly board meetings. It is not only a great way for you to keep up with the board's ongoing programs, but it is also a great place to get your feet wet if you are considering becoming a board member. Check our website for details on all of these exciting board activities.

I hope you are as enthusiastic as I am as we get set for another exciting year ahead with ITBE! Have a restful summer for our work is never done!

Gevik Anbarchian
President, Illinois TESOL-BE



SIG News: Adult Ed

Let's Get that Advocacy Bus Rolling!

TESOL ADVOCACY DAY 2012 in Washington D.C. was June 18 and 19. I think that we need to start planning now for Advocacy Day 2013. Wouldn't it be great to have a group of Adult Ed SIG members make a trip to Washington D.C.? Let's start talking about it!

In the meantime, there is important ADVOCACY work to be done! The Workforce Investment Improvement Act 2012 is under consideration in Congress. I sent an email out on June 11th, but I know that many of you aren't on the Adult Ed SIG mailing list.

Please be inspired to send an email to the Committee!

Dear Adult Ed SIG Members,

I have been following the progress of the Workforce Investment Improvement Act of 2012 (HR 4297). WIIA 2012 will determine how federal dollars are spent on Adult Education and Adult ESL. This bill is now in committee and our input is needed so that our legislators can make decisions that support Adult ESL students. International TESOL has written a letter to the committee that recommends changes to the current legislation: http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/bin.asp?CID=1&DID=13754&DOC=FILE.PDF. Please read the letter! There are many important problems with WIIA 2012, including a total lack of funding for EL/Civics. No funding=no program!

Also, the bill proposes to consolidate funding for Adult Education with other K-12 education funding. California passed similar legislation recently resulting in a decrease in funding for Adult Ed as school districts are choosing to allocate the majority of their funds to K-12 and cut Adult Ed programs. John McCormick, a retired ESL Instructor, recently wrote an article for the Los Angeles Times that describes what is happening to Adult ESL programs in California: <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/may/01/opinion/la-oe-mccormick-adult-esl-cutbacks-20120501>. Here is an excerpt:

Now, owing to LAUSD's ongoing budget crisis and a change in how the state funds education, there is talk of drastically paring back adult education and ESL. The state used to provide funds to school districts that had to be specifically spent on adult education. Now that state money comes in a lump sum for districts to use as they see fit. Consequently, school districts throughout California are abandoning adult programs and redirecting the money that used to be spent on it to K-12 education.

What can you do? Please take the time to contact the Education and the Workforce Committee today!!! <https://edlaborforms.house.gov/Contact/default.aspx>

I sent an email this morning. It's OK with me if you want to use my message! I want the committee to know that there is a large group of Adult ESL advocates here in Illinois!

I do not support HR 4297 the Workforce Investment Improvement Act of 2012 in its current form. As an Adult ESL Instructor, I support the recommendations proposed by TESOL International stated in the April 16, 2012 letter to The Honorable Virginia Foxx Chair, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training: 1. Authorize the English Literacy and Civics Education Program 2. Include the population of adult English language learners in the state grant formula for adult education. 3. Remove adult education as an option for consolidation under the State Unified Plan. and 4. Restore state leadership to a minimum of 15% and require professional development and technical assistance to eligible providers. Please consider adopting these recommendations. Thanks, Cathy McCabe, Instructor ABE/GED/ESL, College of DuPage

Please check International TESOL's U.S. Advocacy Center: <http://capwiz.com/tesol/issues/alert/?alertid=61432006&PROCESS=Take+Action> for updates on this important piece of legislation.

Meet the Board

Lisa Barrett, Publicity Chair



Hi! My name is Lisa Barrett and I will be serving as the new publicity chair for ITBE. I have been employed in higher education environments for more than six years. I currently teach ESL at Computer Systems Institute in Lombard and Midwestern Career College. I'm also an online English coach for Rosetta Stone. I am committed to serving my students in any possible way I can. That same commitment extends to all the members of ITBE. I firmly believe that professional development strengthens my skills as a teacher and I hope to use those skills to help my students reach their academic goals.

Last year I served as the SIG leader for Higher Education. This was a wonderful experience and I'm glad to continue to serve on ITBE's board. My hope this year as publicity chair is to ensure that

we reach out to as many people, groups, and organizations as possible. I want to make certain that every member of ITBE is aware of all the benefits the organization has to offer. My ultimate goal is to get even more people aware of and involved in all the wonderful opportunities that ITBE shares.

Again, I introduce myself to you as a passionate English educator and ITBE's new publicity chair. I cherish my job and my students and now I cherish the time I will spend developing professionally and sharing my thoughts and ideas with my colleagues.

Yurimi Grigsby –Member at Large

Hello, my name is Yurimi Grigsby and I will be serving this year as a member at large. I am a professor in the Curriculum and Instruction department at Concordia University Chicago in River Forest, IL. I received a PhD in ESL Education from the University of Tennessee, and was a teacher of Spanish at the secondary level and ESL K-12 in my home state of Tennessee prior to joining the faculty at Concordia. In addition to teaching, I participate in local, national and international conferences on second language acquisition and ESL, constantly engaging in emerging research and proven praxis.

As a teacher educator, I am committed to serving the needs of teachers while supporting their important roles of educating culturally and linguistically diverse students. This commitment extends to the members of ITBE as teachers at all levels come together to share approaches and strategies, and as we work together to stay informed on state and federal policies and regulations that greatly impact students from all backgrounds.

Shane Dunkle– Higher Ed SIG Leader

Hello! My name is Shane Dunkle and I will be serving as the new Higher Ed. SIG leader from this year. I guess the best way for me to introduce myself is to give a little background. I have been teaching English for a little over 10 years now, 5 of which I spent in Japan and 5 at Moraine Valley Community College as an adjunct IELP instructor, so I really enjoy the cross-cultural communication aspect of language teaching as well as the pedagogical side. This is reflected in my goals for the classroom in that I strive for students to see English as a means of communications that reflects various cultures, rather than just something they see on tests and needed to get out of a program. I have recently finished my MA TESOL at UIC and am currently interning at the University of Purdue at Calumet over the summer. It is a fun experience and I find it an exciting challenge to be continually growing as an instructor.

I must admit that I am entirely new to the ITBE community and become involved when I saw how others were contributing to the overall enrichment and support for teachers in our community. I was very excited to contribute my own ideas and experiences and thought the best way possible was to volunteer for the higher education SIG since I have worked mostly in higher education institutions. I have many ideas that I will try and implement over the coming year based on member suggestions from setting up a central, easy to use, communication site for members to suggest ideas or give comments, to finding speakers for workshops that address members' needs for individual instructional contexts such as pronunciation.



I hope that in the coming year, the activities and ideas that the Higher Education SIG group will be involved in will allow everyone in our community to grow and prosper as instructors and excite other members to participate and contribute so that everyone can benefit from our shared experiences. If anyone has any ideas for anything that they would like to see happen over the next

year from kinds of speakers at workshops or events or activities for members, please do not hesitate to contact me at highsig@itbe.org. Thank you very much for this opportunity!

Miguel Fernandez – Vice President



Hello, my name is Miguel Fernandez, and this year I will be ITBE Vice President and Convention Chair. I currently work as an Associate

Professor in the Department of Early Childhood and Bilingual Education at Chicago State University, where I teach undergraduate and graduate ESL and bilingual classes. I am a native of Spain, but I have been living and working in the United States since 2003.

I began teaching Spanish as a foreign language in Atlanta, GA, and two years later I moved to Illinois, where I started teaching in a bilingual program for Cicero Public Schools District 99. During the last five years, I have also been teaching as an adjunct professor at National Louis University and the Illinois Resource Center. This is my third year working full time at Chicago State University.

Since I started in the field of education, I have participated in several national and international conferences on second language acquisition and applied linguistics, and I have always been actively involved in several committees. I am also Chair Elect of the TESOL Higher Education Interest Section and a TESOL program reviewer for institutions seeking recognition from the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

I got my PhD in education, and in 2007 I finished a second masters degree in language testing. I have an active research agenda, which includes topics in Second Language Acquisition, Bilingual Education and Language Testing and Assessment.

I am very excited to become ITBE Vice President, and I look forward to working with all of you.

Joshua Thusat – Member at Large

I am excited to be a new Member at Large on the IL- TESOL/BE Board. I know the importance of continued networking, not simply at the community college level where I work, but at all levels of ESL education. I teach ESL at Harry S Truman College, and I am aware that Illinois holds a significant place for community college teachers. It has the third largest community college system, and the Illinois Community College Board reports that 62,000 students with limited English proficiency are served annually. As a board member, I would like to consider how we prepare students for colleges and careers across

the state, paying close attention to the varying approaches to constructing successful ESL programs. What are you doing that works? What are you doing that doesn't work? Now that we know, how can we get this information out to our colleagues?

I recently graduated from the TESL program at Northeastern Illinois University. While going to school at NEIU and teaching in NEIU's English Language Program, I became familiar with current trends in teaching academic vocabulary using corpora. These current trends rely heavily on teachers being continually updated on new tools, not just for making authentic lessons, but for choosing great textbooks and materials. Recently, I have also been interested in approaches to teaching pragmatics in ESL classrooms. Both of these interests rely on technology (more often than not), and innovative uses of technology.



I hope to contribute by promoting these ideas pertinent to my background, and I also look forward to working with the board to help all of us share our knowledge with colleagues across the state. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the upcoming year.

Meet the Board in Person!

**Board meetings are
open to all ITBE
members!**

It's a great way to
learn how things
work and see if you
might like to join the
board next year or
join a committee right
now!

See itbe.org for a schedule.
Just be sure to RSVP to the
ITBE president by email &
get final details before any
meeting you want to attend.

Professional Planner

October 2012 – **ITBE Fall Workshop**

Concordia University, River Forest, IL

November 30, 2012- **ALRC Fall Conference**

Indian Lakes Resort, Bloomingdale, IL

February 22-23, 2013 – **ITBE Annual State Convention**

Lisle, IL

March 20-23, 2013 – **TESOL Convention**

Dallas, Texas

April 2013 – **ITBE Spring Workshop**

TBA

Check www.itbe.org for details

ITBE Board Meetings

All ITBE members are welcome to attend board meetings to learn more about the organization, give input, or learn how to become involved.

Saturday, August 25, 2012 (10:00am)

Friday, September 21, 2012 (4:30pm)

Saturday, October 20, 2012 (1:00pm)

Friday, November 16, 2012 (4:30pm)

Friday, January 25, 2013 (4:30pm)

Saturday, April 20, 2013 (10:00am)

Saturday, May 18, 2013 (10:00am)

Saturday, June 15, 2013 (10:00am)

*For board meetings, please email president@itbe.org to RSVP and get location information.

Book Review

Review by Susan Berkman

Intercultural Language Activities

Author: John Corbett (2010)

Editor: Scott Thornbury

Publisher: Cambridge University Press

My first impression on encountering *Intercultural Language Activities* was, “This looks like fun!” But, after delving into the activities, I more seriously believe that *Intercultural Language Activities* is an essential resource for ESL teachers working with adults, particularly in a conversation context. A recent addition to Cambridge University Press’ 40+ handbooks for language teachers, this title combines cultural exploration with language learning through 84 activities designed to promote communicative competency. In this handbook, Scottish born author, John Corbett, melds his interests in discourse analysis, corpus-based



language studies and intercultural language education, with the facility of electronic communication. His purpose is clearly pragmatic, “developing skill in using the resources of the target language” (1-2). The author believes that it is more important for a language learner, “to communicate effectively in a range of more or less familiar contexts,” rather than speak with native-like proficiency (1). Corbett’s intercultural approach is further designed to promote the learner’s own identity in the face of new, and multi-cultural, environments.

His aims, knowing how to relate and interpret meaning, developing critical awareness, knowing how to discover cultural information, as well as how to value the beliefs and attitudes of others, are met through a wide variety of engaging and provocative pursuits that take the learners outside the classroom, both electronically and physically. Moreover, the author respects the intelligence of the language learners by bringing discourse into sophisticated realms of intercultural relationships and navigation.

This handbook is organized into 14 content units, ranging from “Setting up an online community”, to “Public spaces”, to “Interpretations”, to “Presenting an image”. Units on “Politics”, and “Religion”, clearly do not comply with the convention to avoid discussing politics and religion in polite company. Instead, the author views the classroom as a “safe place” in which to explore differences, contrasts, and concerns that are couched in language learning. I found the unit on “Mediations” to be particularly intriguing, because how language is used

and expressed is vital to resolving conflicts and misunderstandings. One activity in this unit, “Styles of conflict resolution”, involves discussion, prompted by questionnaires, about various ways of dealing with disagreements, such as confrontational, collaborative, accommodating and avoiding strategies. Another is “Questioning and defending a belief”, a discussion format directed to upper-intermediate and above; hedges and intensifiers, as well as the use of sympathetic or hostile tone of voice, are among the elements.

With regard to the nuts and bolts of the activities, each one follows a consistent format, beginning with a shaded box template providing: a concise *outline* of the activity, the *focus*, the language *level*, the estimated *time* required, and *preparation* needed. There are easy-to-follow step-by-step procedures, along with suggested questionnaires, discourse models, charts and matrices, which can be photocopied. A companion CD is also included, containing all of the assorted charts and dialogues to either print or project. The

activities range from 15 minutes to over 40 minutes in length. Roughly half are contained in one session; the remainder require 2-3 follow-up sessions. Most of the activities require a computer, projector, or photocopies. More compellingly, the activities make extensive use of realia, such as print ads, airline food, favorite songs, or film reviews. Role-play and corpus based investigations, such as comparing newspapers throughout the world, are interesting elements. Moreover, language learning is not neglected. For instance, vocabulary building is both implicit and explicit, as in “brainstorm a vocabulary list that is useful for describing sports.”

The density and sophistication of *Intercultural Language Activities*, however, provide some challenges for the facilitator/instructor. Fully three-quarters of the exercises are directed towards intermediate and higher skill levels. Debates, for example, are clearly designed for upper-intermediates. As a result, the units would need to be scaled back for less skilled language learner groups. Preparation, securing computer

access, gathering realia or other assorted materials, could prove time-consuming and, perhaps, daunting, even though the activities are advertised as universally “requiring minimal preparation”. Certainly the content will need to be eventually updated; Barbie Dolls (in *Living Dolls*), or *Tabu* by Dana (in *Smelling Sweet*), may become passé over time (or not!). Never the less, the provocative ideas and suggestions in the intercultural activities provide a robust platform with which to design an adult ESL curriculum. I intend to keep this book very handy in my library.

Have you found a great resource for ESL educators? Submit a review for our next issue of the LINK!

**Technology Related: Sept. 15
Open Call: Dec. 15th**

No publisher submissions or press releases, please.