

# ***In This Issue***

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**ORTESOL Journal Editors**

The 2007 issue of *ORTESOL Journal* was about the future of the profession. This issue continues some of last year's themes with an emphasis on problem solving. We address how we as teachers, researchers, and citizens are looking for ways to improve English language learning and teaching, from the level of the individual classroom to the state system.

In the previous issue of the *Journal*, Karie Mize and Maria Dantas-Whitney reported that the Oregon Department of Education requires the English Language Development curriculum to be "taught by qualified teachers." These teachers have become qualified by adding an ESOL endorsement to their teaching credentials. In this issue, Mize and Dantas-Whitney, along with Alejandra Favela and Mollie Galloway, present the results of a survey of teachers who have obtained this endorsement. While many teachers reported genuine benefits (such as increased knowledge) from receiving the endorsement, others reported that their increased qualifications resulted in decreased choice in their teaching assignments. In addition, they reported a "lack of clarity" about their professional roles after receiving the endorsement and inconsistent school and policy support from administrators. It is hoped that those in decision-making capacities in Oregon schools will take note of this article and provide their ESOL-endorsed teachers with the support they need to serve all students effectively.

In the previous issue, we expressed a hope that Bill Walker would continue to contribute to *ORTESOL Journal*. We are pleased to be able to publish his article on how to make academic reading instruction more effective and enjoyable. He argues that a strictly top-down approach has failed to create fluent readers and that a foundation of bottom-up skills is necessary for readers to become truly fluent. A foundations-first approach

integrates skills, but it does so in a structured and principled way, involving students in intensive reading of challenging texts as well as in extensive reading of easier texts. In keeping with recent trends, foundations-first emphasizes the importance of vocabulary because "language is grammaticalized lexis, not lexicalized grammar."

In her article, Faiza Derbel reports on classroom-based research that explored how students went about integrating computer use and oral presentations in an intensive summer course. She conducted a task-based project in which students collected information from the Internet, collaborated on a PowerPoint presentation, and presented it to their fellow students. She wanted to know exactly how the students used the protocols given to them, how they used the Internet as a resource, how they managed information, and how they created their final performances. Additional information from her course, including assignment sheets and guidelines for student presentations, can be found online at <http://www.ortesol.org>.

In the Teaching Notes section, Zenaida Lorena Talamante Ayvar and Don Prickel explain an approach to error correction that hands responsibility for when to be corrected over to the learner - literally, with cards learners display. We have also included pieces by Maya Moore and Ron Metzler on how to enliven classrooms using theme-based teaching and drama, respectively. Finally, Michael Witbeck reports on a survey of English examinations in Northern Cyprus secondary schools. Detailed results of this survey can be found online at <http://www.ortesol.org>.

This is Byrne Brewerton's first issue as an editor. Not only has he enjoyed reading the articles for the knowledge they provide, he has also learned a great deal about the process and challenges of publishing the *Journal*. He hopes to be involved in the *Journal* for many years to come.