Now in its sixth year, the TC TESOL Certificate Program continues to grow in numbers of future English as a Second and Foreign Language teachers it trains, as well as in the quality and breadth of its curricular offerings.

This year, the 6-week program will offer four 24-hour baseline courses — Teaching, Learning & Assessing; Introduction to English Language Structure; Classroom Practices; and the Practicum — as well as an opportunity to teach adults in TC’s Community English Program (CEP).

Should there be sufficient interest, a special English for Younger Learners Classroom Practices and Practicum will be added. Those training to teach younger learners will have the opportunity to observe elementary school ESL classes while their fellow students work with adults in the CEP.

In addition to the regular courses, guest speakers will include renown textbook author Susan Stempleski on teaching with video and State Department Senior Language Fellow Carol Crehan (presently working in Sri Lanka) on finding English jobs here and abroad.

New for Summer 2004

An optional 7th week of specialized workshops has been added, including English for Specific Purposes: Business and Preparing Students for Standardized Tests Like the TOEFL. These workshops are open to TESOL Certificate Program participants, alumni, and the general TESOL public at a modest fee. Students who successfully complete receive a Certificate of Attendance from the Program.

The TC TESOL Certificate Program is jointly sponsored by the Teachers College TESOL Graduate Program and the Center for Educational Outreach and Innovation (CEO&I) at Teachers College.

For more information on the TESOL Certificate Program, contact the director, Linda Wine:
212-678-3459
tesolcertprog@tc.columbia.edu

or visit our web site at:
www.tc.columbia.edu/academic/a&hdept/tesolcert.

For more information on the graduate program in TESOL, call 212-678-3936 or visit the TESOL Program’s web site:
www.tc.columbia.edu/academic/tesol.

For more information on the many TESOL weekend workshops offered by CEO&I during the year, log on to their web site at: www.tc.columbia.edu/ceoi or call 212-678-3459.

The first thing my students tell me when they enter my class is they want to be fluent in English. Helping them become fluent is my goal and the goal of the community-based language program where I teach. With this in mind, I would like to compare two students I worked with extensively for a year. What makes this an interesting case to study is the remarkable difference in the development of these two students’ respective communicative competencies. Both started at about the same time. Both had almost perfect attendance. And both received the same type of instruction. But only one is really moving towards fluency.

(Continued on page 2)
Svetlana is a 55-year-old woman from Moscow who worked as a physician in Russia for over 20 years. She is highly educated, reads a great deal both in English and Russian, studies English in two other community-based language programs, and came to the United States with her husband when he found a job with an American company. She has two grown sons living and working in the U.S., and she and her husband plan to remain in the U.S. permanently. Svetlana is very anxious to learn English so she can find a job in medicine to become more independent.

Mayumi is a 32-year-old woman from Tokyo, Japan. She has an Associates degree, worked as a bank teller before marrying, reads very little, and prefers to study English in class only. She came to the U.S. with her husband who is studying at a prestigious university in town. She is a housewife with two small children and plans to stay home with them until they are grown. She wants to learn English to communicate with her neighbors, babysitters and people she meets in daily life in the U.S.

If we look at these two students’ educational backgrounds (medical degree vs. associate’s), exposure to input (attending three classes vs. only one), cognition (an assumption that one person’s general intelligence is higher than the other’s), we might guess that the stronger language learner and more accomplished English speaker is Svetlana. Our guess would be incorrect. Whereas Mayumi builds on the grammatical knowledge of English she learned in Japan while acquiring the nuances of the language that help her get along with other people, Svetlana has a great deal of trouble with linguistic, pragmatic, and discourse competence. Why is there such a difference between these two students when they are receiving the same kind of instruction? To answer these questions, we need to look at their personalities, learning styles, and goals.

Svetlana’s affective filter is up almost constantly. Being 20 years older and Russian, she feels she doesn’t have anything in common with the rest of the class—primarily young Asian mothers. She also misinterprets their frequent nervous laughter as laughing at her. So, while her knowledge of the language is good, her performance— that is, her actual use of the language in concrete situations—is poor.

While Svetlana’s high affective filter could be the cause of this disparity in levels between Mayumi and herself, Svetlana has other problems. For one thing, her noticing skills are so poor that it’s hard for her to notice relevant input and then use it. Additionally, she is also not a good ‘guesser.’ And finally, she is uncomfortable with ambiguity; she wants every word clearly defined to feel comfortable with what is going on in class. Since ambiguity is part of language learning, her desire for total clarity is a discouraging stumbling block on the road to her long-term goal of returning to medicine.

On the other hand, Mayumi’s affective filter is extremely low and her competence and performance are fairly equal. She loves being in the U.S., has made friends with the other non-Japanese women in the class, has a lot in common with them, has no reservations about speaking in class, and notices new forms and quickly integrates them into her spoken language. Since her goal is speaking with others, we see she is excelling at reaching it.

Obviously, this has been a cursory examination of two students, but it highlights that while we think we’re providing the same instruction to all, not all our students may really be ‘getting’ it. Whereas Mayumi’s more holistic focus on fluency jibes well with my program’s goals and my teaching style, Svetlana’s need for constant clarity does not. The challenge for me as a teacher is to try to reach out to Svetlana without losing sight of fluency as a goal, perhaps by working one-on-one with her to developing her noticing skills.

If you have comments on this article or suggestions on how to work with students such as Svetlana, please send them to the Newsletter at tesolcertprog@columbia.edu.
**Ann Chen**

The 2003 TESOL Summer Certificate program was an eye-opening experience for me. In addition to being introduced to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) — the dominant approach in the Second and Foreign Language Teaching —, we were also encouraged to explore other teaching approaches, as well.

The Program strongly recommended that we take advantage of as many weekend TESOL workshops as possible offered by the Center for Educational Outreach and Innovation at TC. I took Experience Learning Another Language: the Counseling-Learning Approach taught by Jenny Rardin where I experienced how Counseling-Learning operates in a language learning setting, including the role that a language counselor plays. I then wrote a paper critiquing Counseling-Learning in light of other language learning theories we covered in the program.

Now back in my MA program at Cambridge, the paper I wrote this summer has become the basis for an action research study I am doing on Counseling-Learning where I teach Chinese through the Counseling-Learning approach, making changes where needed as I proceed. My goal is to make this approach more theoretically sound and effective.

Thanks to the wide range of readings I did in the Program and my invaluable exposure to student teaching, I feel I had rigorous training and am a more competent researcher and teacher. I also know I made friendships that will last a lifetime.

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**Elisabeth Robart**

Elisabeth was a professional chef who interned at Alice Waters’ renown restaurant Chez Panisse before deciding to return to her first love, language, and become an English teacher. She will be combining those passions soon. She leaves at the end of March for a job with a consulting firm in Xi’an China where she will work on EFL projects for children and teachers, as well as develop a branch of the firm in culinary consulting.

Such intensity for all those weeks at TC and then such an abrupt end — thanks to the Blackout. We made friends, worked within tight deadlines, learned about interlanguage in our potential students while we were acquiring an interlanguage of our own. We muddled through, laughed, got frustrated, and in the end all came out with more skills, a better understanding of English and best of all — new friends. We learned how to teach, and doing that, we taught each other. As I prepare to leave for China in the next few months, I hope we all keep in touch. E-mail has become a lifeline for those of us far away. And now for your taste buds — a recipe to warm you up in these frigid months: Curried Butternut Squash Soup.

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**Curried Butternut Squash Soup**

**Ingredients:**
1. Butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cut into 1-inch pieces
2. Granny Smith apple, peeled and cut into pieces
3. Large Spanish onion, diced
4. Large can vegetable or chicken stock
5. Tablespoon olive or canola oil
6. Tablespoon curry powder (more, if desired)

**Steps:**

1. Sauté onions in oil in large pot over moderate heat.
2. Add curry powder and sauté onions and curry together for about one minute.
3. Add squash and apple; cover with stock.
4. Reduce heat to low and simmer until squash and apple are soft and mushy.
5. Remove from heat and let cool until just warm.
6. Process until smooth, taste and adjust seasonings.

**Note:**
If using a regular standup blender, only fill blender half full or your life will be unpleasant. If using a hand immersion blender, go slowly and watch for splashes. Soup is often better the next day and can be frozen once it has completely cooled.

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Elisabeth Robart during a quiet moment in the summer.
Teachers College, Columbia University has been in the forefront of teacher education for more than 100 years. TC was the first school to offer a graduate degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and its faculty and alumni remain pre-eminent in the field.

The TC TESOL Certificate Program is designed for professionals in the U.S. considering a career change, for recent college graduates who want to travel and teach English abroad, and for international teachers of English as a Foreign Language who want to continue their professional developments. Certificate candidates receive intensive academic training and take part in relevant professional and cultural experiences, all within a six-week period in the summer:

- Explore different teaching methods, materials, and technologies
- Engage in meaningful interactions with American and international colleagues
- Update your knowledge of linguistics and second language acquisition
- Immerse yourself in English and New York culture
- Connect to the Teachers College network around the world

For more information, contact the director Linda Wine by phone (212-678-3459) or e-mail: tesolcertprog@tc.columbia.edu ▲

WHAT’S UP WITH YOU?

Diana Schoiman (2000) has been teaching advanced ESL class at the Marymount Manhattan Institute for Immigrant Concerns, but Marymount has now asked her to teach their new ESL class for Central Park employees this term. Although Diana loves her advanced students, she is looking forward to this new challenge. On a more personal note, she and her husband are expecting their first grandchild in April. Diana says she’s lost touch with most of her classmates and would love to hear from you. Her e-mail is: DSdesses@aol.com.

Just back from Brazil, Jonathan Lee (2002) says a high point of his trip was visiting the Mangeira Samba School: “By midnight, it was pulsating with thousands of Brazilians of all ages, shapes, sizes and colors doing the samba with great alegria. The energy was wonderful; if only my body could do the steps!”

Rachel Aronson (2003) was working at Aspect (Manhattan College, Riverdale NY), and says it was a great place to get her feet wet (great students and teacher resources), but a long hike from home. So, Rachel will be teaching adults (mostly beginners) at Bronx Community College (BCC) this spring. She is looking forward to working closely with other ESL teachers and taking advantage of the in-service ESL teacher training BCC provides.

Following up on a lesson plan Kyung Mi Lee (2003) developed last summer, she is running ESL groups for Korean mothers in New Jersey using children’s literature. The women love it because it gives them a chance to become more familiar with English, American culture, and books to read with their kids. According to Se-Ryeo Choi (2003), Kyung Mi’s classes are so popular, there’s a waiting list to get in!

And finally, thanks go to Fran Schnall for hosting a 2003 reunion in January. Fran finds teaching in CCNY’s Literacy Program truly satisfying. ▲

Let us know what’s up with you. Please send a photo if possible along with your news to: tesolcertprog@tc.columbia.edu.