

# TESOL/AL Times

Volume 5, Number 1

316 Main Hall, 525 West 120th St., New York, NY 10027

Summer 2005

**Dates to Remember:**

Participate in the 28th annual SLRF (Second Language Research Forum) Conference:

October 7-9, 2005

Teachers College

For more information:  
<http://www.tc.columbia.edu/academic/tesol/SLRF2005/>

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Working Papers in TESOL & Applied Linguistics:

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**The research-centered teacher and the teaching-centered researcher: An interview with Dr. ZhaoHong Han**

By Mark Bechara

The spring term had recently ended. The students were either preparing for their hard earned graduation or breathing a sigh of relief from yet another challenging and edifying semester. Although the hallways were mostly empty, the lecture halls filled with echoes and the library temporarily

deserted in its cherry-wood and aero-chair splendor, Dr. ZhaoHong Han was still going from one appointment to another. Such is the passion of the newly tenured professor. As our discussion ranged from her future publications, conferences, and the web journal, one underlying tone seemed

always present: to learn is to teach and to teach is to learn.

**Dr. Han, we all know you as someone who has an enormous capacity for work. Between all your obligations, will you be publishing a new book soon?** (contd. on page 4)

**When is an apple not an apple? Give up ...? When that APPLE is Carol ChAPELLE.**

By Joseph Martz

Enhanced input aside, Applied Linguistics and TESOL were very fortunate to be able to coax Dr. Chapelle away from her obligations as Professor in TESOL and Applied Linguistics at Iowa State University and as Second Vice-President of the American Association of Applied Linguistics long enough to deliver the fifth annual APPLE (Applied Linguistics and Language Education) lecture, "CALL Pedagogy: Suggestions from Research", April 22, 2005. It was attended by over 100 faculty, students, alumni and staff drawn from the greater TC community.



In a follow-up to a more theory-oriented lecture that she had delivered earlier that afternoon, Dr. Chapelle enumerated six ways in which computer-assisted language learning (CALL) can facilitate second language acquisition (SLA).

**The more modes, the better.** Among the great

advantages of CALL is its ability to deliver aural as well as visual stimulation, making for a multimedia, multisensory experience. Hyperlinks in a reading passage, for example, permit access to the pronunciation, definition or graphic representation of words whose meaning may not be clear from their context.

**Help helps.** When CALL users are given extra help in the course of task fulfillment, they tend to outperform the control group on post-test; i.e., short-term at least, this extra help would (contd. on page 2)

## TESOL/AL Roundtable Year in Review, 2004-2005

By Jeff Fontenot

Still in its youth, TESOL/AL Roundtable has had a successful 2004-2005 academic year. In sum, the president, Mimi Platzer, and her committee planned two semesters full of academic and social meetings, the purpose being to offer TC's TESOL/AL community a forum to share and converse about topics relevant to the field.

To start the academic year, a "Meet and Greet" potluck was held for new students in the program. This was later followed by an ice-cream social designed for students to provide information about their favorite breadth course, where each participant shared the respective course's syllabus and gave a short evaluative description of the class and professor. TESOL/AL Roundtable also organized a workshop led by Teachers College professors to outline the exit MA Master's Essay requirements, providing students with a corpus of expectations to guide their final research project.

Midway through the school year it became evident that some students were planning to present at conferences, so a "Presenting at Conferences:101" workshop was organized to meet the need. Two students presented in front of their peers in order to simulate the eventual experi-

ence of presenting at a conference, and the presentations were followed by summative Q/A sessions. To conclude the year, TESOL/AL Roundtable threw a party to celebrate their accomplishments and pass the torch of responsibility to the new second-year TESOL/AL Roundtable president and organizing committee. ■

### Carol ChAPELLE *Cont'd from page 1*

appear to give them the advantage. This was true of learners who were allowed to watch a video accompanied by subtitles in the target language.

**Teachers need to help learners help themselves to help.** Having extra help at their fingertips does not necessarily translate to learners knowing enough about CALL to take advantage of it. Rather, it is incumbent on educators to act as the go-between, that learners might be able to make informed decisions about the role it ought to play in their CALL and in their SLA in general.

**Explicit is better for learning grammar.** What this suggestion amounts to is drawing learners' attention to ways in which their grammar diverges from the norm. Dr. Chapelle gave as an example the Korean equivalent of the verb *happen*, which leads ELL speakers of that first language to overuse the

passive in English. She argued that explicitly drawing those learners' attention to that error is more efficacious in helping them to overcome it than more implicit means of instruction could be.

**Plan for good computer-mediated communication (CMC) experiences.** In other words, the first assumption of educators should be that chatting online can provide valuable opportunities for learning; the challenge then is for educators to make it so. Dr. Chapelle went on to describe a chatroom task in which learners were found to self-correct. This is in line with the view that, because interaction forces learners to take the needs of their interlocutors into account, it demands a focus on form as a means to promoting the production of comprehensible output.

**Think pragmatic competence.** Because CMC expands the classroom to encompass the world, it provides a variety of contexts in which learners can test their grasp of pragmatics. For example, the use distinction between the French pronouns 'tu'/'vous' (translated as the English 'you') is difficult for native speakers of English to master. This was a verbal tic of which a certain learner's peers grew progressively less tolerant; with the use of CALL, we are to assume, the form was eventually acquired in a native-like way. ■

*For excerpts from an interview with Dr. Chapelle, refer to the Web Journal:* [www.tc.columbia.edu/academic/tesol/Webjournal/interview2.htm](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/academic/tesol/Webjournal/interview2.htm)

# TESOL/AL End-of-the-Year Party, 2005

By Dionna Mullin

A highlight of every end-of-the-year party (besides Professor Howard Williams' cooking) is the announcement of the APPLE award winners. This year Professor Leslie Beebe presented the awards for outstanding M.A. papers in the TESOL and Applied Linguistics departments. The high quality of the work submitted this semester was evidenced by the awarding of two winning papers for each program. Jesseca Long received the TESOL M.A.

award for her paper "Integrating Language Development and Content Area Instruction for English Language Learners" along with Steve Bassi for his paper "Learner Perceptions of Corrective Feedback: Teacher Tactics and Learner Reactions".

Jennifer Kronovet received the Applied Linguistics M.A. award for her paper "Speaking Jewish: Yiddish in the Discourse of First-Generation American Yiddish Speakers" along with Dafna Ben-Anath for her paper "The Role of Connectives in Text Comprehension".

Many students remarked how fortunate they felt to be at TC among colleagues creating such high-quality work, which was also evidenced by the excellent submissions for this year's Fanselow Award. Professors Barbara Hawkins and Joanna Labov presented this year's eleven submissions for the Fanselow, which included projects from Caren Lee, Skye MacLeod, Roman Delgado, Laura Berson, Joseph Martz, Sandra Alvarado, Karly Bell, Vanessa

Ferra, Tara Waller, Mimi Platzer and Christopher Stillwell. Due to the excellence of the projects demonstrating the "Fanslovian perspective" submitted this year, two winners were chosen. Christopher Stillwell received the award for his work on the use of motivation as an additional language skill (aka "a language superpower"), along with Mimi Platzer for her classroom project for elementary school students on camera obscura (a darkened enclosure

where light passes through a lens pin-hole and an upside-down image is seen on the opposite surface). Paper entries and project submissions from each entrant were displayed throughout



## Research Questions

- How much does Prof. Han sleep?
- What are her time management tricks?
- How many languages does she speak?
- Who does she say 'ciao' to?
- What will she have achieved by 2050?
- When does she wear a scarf?



the room, including an example of the camera obscura Mimi's students made. Our language superpowers were even put to the test by an emergency message on the state of Passive Peterson from an entrapped Active Man.

A special highlight included the recognition of Professor Zhaohong Han's tenure. Professor Han is noted for her hard work and dedication to the department, her students and her academic work. Some of her students did a little research of their own in investigating how she has the time to accomplish so much. Applying tried-and-true research methods, Professor Han's students investigated several pressing research questions addressing the relationship between tenure and professional development, questioning whether occupational stabilization would lead to fossilization. Some research topics included extrapolating Professor Han's sleeping patterns from her emailing habits and determining who Professor Han says *ciao* to. All results pointed to the definitive conclusion (with a significance of .0001!) that there are no effects of a critical period and that Professor Han will indeed continue her impressive work well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century! ■

**Photos:** Top left: Shawn Chang, Professor Howard Williams, and June Wai. Center: A slide from the presentation honoring Professor Han's tenure. Bottom Center: Chris Stillwell and Linda Wine. Bottom Right: Antonietta Cal y Mayor Turnbull, Joseph Martz, Julie Matsubara, and Ayako Kawase.

## Interview with Dr. ZhaoHong Han *Cont'd from page 1*

As you know, my first book came out last year. It was the first book in the field on the issue of fossilization. My second book is coming out, hopefully, this November. It'll be a sequel to the 2004 book. It's called *Studies on fossilization in second language acquisition*. It's a collection of empirical studies by a number of researchers. I think it will make an important contribution to the field, because if we only have the first book people will only get an overview of the research that has been done in the past 30 years; but this new book really captures the recent empirical studies on this issue. I'm also negotiating a book contract with TESOL on Teaching L2 Reading. It will be a co-edited volume, with Neil Anderson.

**You had mentioned that you have a data base of over 200 research ideas. Can you give us the top five on that list?**

That number is going up day by day. It's hard for me to say, because every issue is important and every issue has been under-researched. But having that data base is not only useful for me but also for my students. When students come to me and tell me that they have no idea what to work on for their dissertations or term projects, I can just pull things out from the data base and discuss

the issues with them.

**Now that you are a permanent fixture at TC, what are your visions for the college and the TESOL/AL department?**

Well, that is such a big question. The field is really developing rapidly and if we don't move along with it we will be left behind, even though Teachers College is a big name. We need to maintain our sensibility as to what progress is

being made and we need to be proactive in terms of what we can do to modify our existing curriculum

to keep up with what is going on.

**Are there specific things that the department is doing to meet these goals?**

The web journal is one example. Part of the motivation for even setting it up was to promote the ex-

change between all of us at TC and likeminded people from elsewhere. Another thing we're doing is to have a major conference here. That, of course, is the SLRF (Second Language Research Forum) conference. The Apple Lecture is also an important part of this effort to keep us up to date with the latest development.

**Regarding the web journal, what are your visions for it?**

My long-term vision is to make this journal number one in our field. The web journal is full of potential. One of the things that I really want to do is to create an empirical data base and connect it to the articles that are published. All the paper journals are not able to include much data, so we have to take many things for granted. There is no way we can replicate the study, no way to question how the data were analyzed, because we don't see the data. The web journal has



*"I can't tell you how important it is to me to make [teaching and research] go hand in hand."*



## Interview with Dr. ZhaoHong Han Cont'd

the potential to allow people to see the data and replicate the study.

Also, our papers target a different kind of audience. We target work in progress, as opposed to well-finished research. We think that work in progress is interesting in many ways. We have an educational purpose. We want this journal to motivate students to publish their work.

And we also want to encourage people who are no longer students, but are engaged in such things as longitudinal studies, to report on their current findings.

**The description on the SLRF conference website states, "This conference is devoted specifically to exploring interfaces between SLA research and second language instruction." What do you hope it will do to enrich the TESOL/AL program at TC?**

First of all, it will increase the visibility of the program. We're expecting over 300 researchers and students coming from all over the world. This is a great way to let the world know that our students are doing wonderful work. It's a conference that will showcase the students' achievements more than it will the faculty's achievements. This conference is known to be a graduate student-run conference. It's very prestigious. In North America, this is the only second

language forum. There is a European equivalent, *EuroASLA*, which stands for the *European Association for Second Language Acquisition Research*, but it's run by researchers. This will be the first time Teachers College has hosted this conference and for us it is a prestigious honor. It will provide an opportunity for our students to really hear the research and meet with people in the field.

**Will the TESOL/AL department offer a course related to the SLRF conference in the fall?**

Thanks for asking about that. I will be the one offering a course in conjunction with the conference. It's going to be a one-credit course. Participants will be able to selectively attend ten paper sessions, depending on their interests. In addition, I will offer a two-hour pre-conference orientation session and a two-hour post-conference session to discuss what was presented at the conference.

**With the TESOL/AL web journal and the SLRF conference coming to Teachers College, there really seems to be a momentum within the department.**

Absolutely! And for me personally,

I'm so committed to doing new things and bringing our students up to speed as to what's out there. I think it's so important. I want our students to get the best experience they can get from Teachers College.

*"Getting tenure means more motivation. It gives me the impetus to do more. But my effort won't ever end."*

**Before we end the interview, Dr. Han, is there anything else you would like to address or emphasize?**

Well, perhaps one thing I want to go

back to is this relationship between teaching and research. I can't tell you how important it is to me to make these two things go hand in hand. At this institute of education, we instructors need to set good examples for our students. The best examples would have to come from us as opposed to coming from books. We must demonstrate to our students that what we're talking about can actually be put into practice. Many people think teaching and research don't always go hand in hand; or they think that if they spend more time teaching they won't be able to do research or if they spend more time doing research they won't be able to teach well. For me, I want to devote equitable amounts of time to each of these two. Over the years this has worked for me. Research has really enriched my teaching and teaching has really enriched my research. ■

# Tsunami Disaster and the Role of the Teacher *By Christopher Murphy*

On December 26th, 2004 the United States Geological Survey (USGS) detected an earthquake measuring nine on the Richter scale. The epicenter of this earthquake was located off Sumatra, Indonesia; 250 kms south-southeast of the city of Banda Aceh. Hundreds of thousands were killed in the waves that came crashing down this day, with the highest number of (confirmed) deaths recorded in that same region: more than 230,000.

According to Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, it was an unprecedented, global catastrophe requiring an unprecedented, global response. The United Nations estimated 5 billion dollars would be needed to deal with the catastrophe. The international effort began immediately and a historic record of more than 4 billion dollars has been achieved.

Since graduating from the TESOL/AL program at TC I had been struggling for some time with the question, "What is the role of the teacher?" I found inspiration in Paulo Freire's words in *Education for Critical Consciousness* (1968):

...the role of man was not only to be in the world, but to engage in relations with the world—that through acts of creation and re-creation, man makes cultural reality and thereby adds to the natural world, which he did not make.

If I had the ability to act, did I have a responsibility to my students and to the global community to act? I approached the administration of my current workplace and suggested they initiate a campus-wide fund-raising campaign for the victims of the Tsunami. After several weeks of deliberation, the administration agreed, and the students began raising money by placing collection boxes in offices around the campus. The school was able to raise a considerable amount and we gained some recognition by a local

newspaper. After this experience, I spoke extensively to colleagues about going to a region like Bandah Aceh for volunteer work.

Unfortunately, I didn't know the first thing about NGOs or disaster relief work. The Indonesian consulate was of little help; I was told I would not be permitted to go to Bandah Aceh. NGOs working in the region said things such as, "You don't have the necessary skills." or "We have all the help we need." Even the administration of my school discouraged me from the endeavor. Armed with little more than the words of Paulo Freire, I left for Bandah Aceh.

Soon after arriving, I found that there was no shortage of work to do. I spent ten days visiting schools and refugee camps. I had an opportunity to meet a large group of international volunteers, UN relief workers, and locals. I also had a chance to attend government meetings addressing needs such as education, employment, and housing.

Seeing the Tsunami's devastation firsthand was overwhelming. I felt very small and very insignificant. I could now comprehend the numbers I saw printed in newspaper reports. Whole communities were washed away. Countless thousands were brought out to the sea.

More heartbreaking than understanding that thousands had been taken on December 26th was meeting the survivors that were left behind. Mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters wept for family members lost in the flood. Hundreds of children were orphaned by the Tsunami. Counselors worked with many of the survivors. On the day I visited, children were coloring pic-

tures of a young child in front of a grave and a field of flowers.

Many of the children had not been able to verbally express themselves. The children were asked to color the picture freely and write what they felt the picture meant on another sheet of paper. Counselors told me the first step in the healing process was for children to understand that there was loss; many of these children, three months after the Tsunami, were still not familiar with the concept of death.

I had a chance to speak to many people while I was in Bandah Aceh. In my discussions with relief workers and government officials the message seemed to be clear: *Do not forget the Tsunami tragedy.* They advised students to realize one does not have to send money or visit Southeast Asia to help. By simply increasing one's awareness of the events that shape our world, one can help immensely.

Since returning from Bandah Aceh, I have had many interesting conversations with colleagues about this experience. I have received both positive and negative feedback. It is my sincere hope that my pictures and presentation brought this event closer to my students. I believe EFL/ESL professionals are making a difference, playing a critical role in fostering cultural understanding in the rapidly changing, global society that we live in today. ■

*Photo: Orphans at a refugee camp in Bandah Aceh, Indonesia*

*For information about organizations that might benefit greatly from the expertise of students and faculty, contact Christopher Murphy at [japanmurphy@gmail.com](mailto:japanmurphy@gmail.com)*



# The Class of 2005

TESOL/AL graduates attending the end-of-the-year party were asked about future plans and favorite Teachers College memories

	<b>Plans</b>	<b>Memories</b>
Steve Bassi	Teach, live, learn! Could I be more vague?	Class with Professor Hawkins! So much to take in, so much to enjoy. She's the best! I have to mention everyone from the K-12 track. So many cool minds!
Channing Burt	Live and work in New York (teaching ESL)	Ask me in a week when I've had the chance to catch my breath.
Anna Chang	Teaching elementary ESL in Glen Rock, NJ at Hamilton Elementary School.	MA in TESOL '05
Yung-hsiang Shawn Chang	Enjoy my doctoral studies and life in Austin	Grueling yet fulfilling. A lot of thanks to the CEP and all the great friends.
Kimee Davidson	To continue teaching pregnant teens in the South Bronx	Taking my Grammar final at Grant's tomb during the blackout of summer 2003
Jeff Fontenot	Teach English at Brooklyn International High School for the remainder of my Peace Corps Fellows stint.	The most vivid memory at TC has to be when Professor Hawkins passed out flashlights, turned off the lights, and explained the phases of the moon to a room full of teachers in the middle of winter.
Chung-Kai Huang	Go back to Taiwan	CEP teaching
Lily Hung	I'm going home to AK for a year, then hopefully come back to TC as a PhD student!	Thursday nights of grammar classes and dinner and drinks immediately afterwards :)
Heejung Jeon	To integrate my eye-opening experiences in TC(& NYC) into my classroom in Seoul.	Had so much fun with my CEP students, especially when one student offered a Salsa lesson..^^
Caren Lee	This summer: teaching at Manhattan International High School. In the fall: teaching at Mamaroneck H.S. in Westchester.	Traveling to Brooklyn by subway for the first time to do a miscue analysis on one of Jeff's elementary ESL students - it was an adventure!
Jesseca Long	Teaching HS for recently arrived immigrants	Reeb and Classroom Practices
Regina Poleza	Teach ESL and Linguistics-related courses at colleges and universities in the US and Brazil	Took great classes, made amazing friends, and improved a lot as a student, teacher, and person.
Lisa Piorczynski	Work, travel, read, celebrate, love, rediscover, return home	Gabi's practicum final at Ji-Hee's apartment. Great food, great people.
Mimi Platzer	Ski, hike and (hopefully) be gainfully employed as a teacher in Austria	I guess it started with grammar trees and ended with a 60-page assessment paper and lots of good times in between
Jeff Prickett	Working with Peace Corps in Chad, I believe.	Grammar trees
Kevin Spinale	Drink and have a nice time. What are your plans?	Let me think.
Tim Ross	I dunno.	Prickett brought the wine. It was the best class ever. You know I don't lie.
Chris Stillwell	Teach abroad, get something published?	Great professors and classmates who helped me really appreciate the value of what we do.

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## TESOL/AL PROGRAMS

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# The TESOL/AL Times

## Alumni: What's New?

**Stay in Touch:** We want to know what you've been up to since you left. Please email your recent accomplishments to [TESOL@exchange.tc.columbia.edu](mailto:TESOL@exchange.tc.columbia.edu). Thanks!

**Give us Feedback:** How can TESOL/AL Times better meet your needs and interests? What would you like to see in future issues? Please give us your ideas at [TESOL@exchange.tc.columbia.edu](mailto:TESOL@exchange.tc.columbia.edu)

**Listserv:** A listserv has been created for TESOL/AL alumni. To subscribe, send an email to [lyris@listserv.tc.columbia.edu](mailto:lyris@listserv.tc.columbia.edu) with the subject line: sub tctesol-al-alumni

**Addresses:** If you have a new address, please email it to the Alumni Relations Office so that TESOL/AL Times can reach you successfully: [talumni@columbia.edu](mailto:talumni@columbia.edu).

**Alumni Services:** The Office of Alumni Relations is dedicated to providing you with new and exciting ways to connect with Teachers College and your fellow alumni. The redesigned alumni web site is just one of the many steps the office is taking to reach out to our alumni. They have also created an email listserv to provide up-to-the-minute news about TC to alumni, and are organizing numerous alumni clubs and regional events across the country. Please visit [www.tc.columbia.edu/alumni/](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/alumni/) for more information.