

PUBLICATION OF THE LOUISIANA TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

Vol. 26, No. 2—Spring 2006

From the President

May 2006

Jeanne Stacy

The academic year is winding down. Before you all take leave for the summer, should you have the good fortune to do so, I would like to give you an update on LaTESOL business.

First, the most recent board meeting was a historic first for LaTESOL; the meeting was conducted via video conference. Baton Rouge Community College hosted the meeting on Tuesday, May 2, and served as one of the sites where local board members convened. In New Orleans, members met at UNO and in Lafayette at ULL. As you can imagine, there are benefits to meeting this way. Videoconferencing allows the board to meet on a weekday during “business” hours, freeing up Saturday mornings. It also reduces each person’s commute considerably. All on the board considered the experience worthwhile, so the next meeting will be via video conference as well.

At the next meeting, the board will be planning the annual fall conference. I am pleased to announce that LaTESOL and LABE will collaborate on this conference scheduled for November 3, 2006, at the LSU Lod Cook Center in Baton Rouge. Over the summer months please check your mail and the LaTESOL website for conference updates. May I also suggest that you take some time this summer to reflect on your classroom experiences, teaching strategies, and any insights you have had and consider sharing these with your colleagues at the conference. The Call for Proposals will soon be made available; I encourage you to submit a proposal to present a session or a poster.

In other news, I am very pleased to announce that board member Georgette Ioup will represent LaTESOL as our advocacy representative on TESOL Advocacy Day 2006 on Capitol Hill. Georgette received a TESOL scholarship to support her travel to Washington, D.C. and will meet with members of Congress on June 21 to discuss issues of importance to TESOL and to Louisiana TESOL. On behalf of this organization’s membership, I wish to extend a sincere thanks to Georgette for her willingness to participate and to represent LaTESOL.

One last reminder: do check the website over the summer months for the latest news and for conference updates.

Best wishes to all over the summer break.



Common Thread

Josette Beaulieu-Grace

Several weeks before TESOL 2006 in Tampa, Florida, each affiliate received a memo outlining the week’s various workshops and presentations of particular interest to affiliates. Some gatherings admitted official delegates only, while others were open to any convention attendee. The three-hour “Affiliate Colloquium” on Wednesday morning, March 15, was open to all. The session was entitled “Policy to Practice: from decision-makers to classroom practitioners.” The moderator was Elke Apelbaum Savoy of the New York City Department of Education. Five representatives from TESOL affiliates from four regions of the world discussed the challenges they faced in implementing ESL/EFL reform in their respective countries.

The first speaker was Mary Jane Abrams, President of TESOL Chile and chair of the English department at Universidad Alberto Hurtado in Santiago. She stressed that

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LaTESOL

Executive Board Meeting

Date: May 2, 2006
 Time: 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
 Location: Teleconference — hosted by Jeanne Stacy at Baton Rouge Community College

LaTESOL Membership FREE through 2006!

Encourage your colleagues to join LaTESOL. Through our 25th Anniversary year, membership will be FREE. Fill out your application online at:

<http://latesol.org/appform.htm>

For more information you may contact:

Liz Anderson, Treasurer,* or

Joanne McMullen, Membership Chair/ Newsletter Editor*

*Contact information found on last page of newsletter.

LaTESOL Newsletter Deadlines

The *LaTESOL Newsletter*, the official publication of the Louisiana Affiliate of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, is published four times a year: January, April, July, and October.

Newsletter items should be sent by the first of each publication month by email to Joanne McMullen, newsletter editor at: jmcmull@lsu.edu. Additional contact info follows:

Joanne McMullen, Ph.D.

LSU Evening School

1207 Pleasant Hall

Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803.

Phone: 225-578-5227 • Fax: 225-578-5305



Ligon to

<http://latesol.org>

to access the latest LaTESOL news and member information.

LaTESOL ADDRESS CHANGES

Send all LaTESOL member address changes to:

Liz Anderson

2239 St. Nick

New Orleans, LA 70131

504-394-7694 (home)

email: eanderso@cox.net

LaTESOL

Registration Grants



If your presentation proposal has been accepted by either Southeast Regional TESOL or TESOL, you may be eligible for a LaTESOL Registration Grant. Below are the conditions of the program:

- Applicants must be current members of LaTESOL.
- Applicants' proposals for a conference presentation must have been accepted by the sponsoring conference organization, i.e. Southeast Regional TESOL or TESOL. *The letter of acceptance should be submitted with the application.*
- Letters of application for the LaTESOL Registration Grant must be received by the President of LaTESOL by the following dates: September 1 for Southeast Regional TESOL and January 1 for TESOL.
- LaTESOL Registration Grants will cover the preregistration fee *at the TESOL member rate* at either conference, *whether or not the applicant is actually a member. No on-site or non- TESOL member fees will be covered.*
- Applicants who show that they were unable to obtain funding from their employers or affiliation will be given priority.

Applicants who receive a Conference Registration Grant from LaTESOL, must agree to serve LaTESOL in one or more of the following ways: making a presentation at the LaTESOL Conference or running for office on the LaTESOL Executive Board. Applicants who receive LaTESOL Registration Grants may not apply again for three years. Registration grant availability will be announced in the Fall and Winter LaTESOL newsletters.

The LaTESOL budget is dependent upon annual dues paid by our members. In the event that budget constraints do not permit the offering of LaTESOL Registration Grants as stated above, the LaTESOL Executive Board will vote to suspend them for the year at the fall meeting and announce that decision in the newsletter.

Advertising in LaTESOL Newsletter

Ad Size:	Rates per issue
full page	\$100
1/2 page	\$ 50
1/4 page	\$ 25
bus. card	\$ 15

Send ad in TIF or GIF file format to LaTESOL Newsletter Editor (jmcmull@lsu.edu) by newsletter deadlines noted on this page.

Common Thread

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after 17 years of dictatorship, there was an absence of infrastructure, and the immediate goal, now that the country had become a democracy under its recently elected first woman president, was to create a new awareness of the need for reform. English would now be taught from grades 5 through 12, instead of the past policy of introducing English in Grade 7. Another serious deficiency in the past was lack of teacher training. English teachers would henceforth be required to take 240 hours of standardized training, and beginning in 2010, they will have to qualify by passing proficiency tests.

The second panelist was Wilmenay Francois, a teacher at the Haitian American Institute for the past 16 years. He discussed how earlier efforts had been hampered by illiteracy – only one in five children attended school – and how the absence of teacher training further aggravated the situation. Now however, the tiny Caribbean republic is implementing curriculum reform in an attempt to divorce education from politics and reduce illiteracy. The need for teacher training is also being addressed. Moreover, some 3,500 students are participating in a U.S.-sponsored cultural exchange.

Sara Al Kuwari from Qatar was next to speak. She explained that prior to 1998, educational authority was in the hands of the government and basic education or “Qatateeb” was limited to the teaching of Islam and Arabic. Then in 1998, two high schools introduced reforms from the perspective of both learning and teaching. They were the first of many to transfer authority to the operators of the schools. In 2004 the reform escalated to a revolution in education with the creation of independent schools, one of which Sara Al Kuwari presently operates with an enrollment of 625 students. These schools are bilingual Montessori schools where math and science are taught in English. The budget comes from the government and is based on the number of students. Teacher training is a must, both in English and in Montessori principles. These independent schools have a longer school year but offer teachers double the salary. Convincing the parents of the merit of this radical reform to produce bilingual students has been a major challenge. Predictably, in the two years since the introduction of independent schools, the greatest success has occurred in grades 1 and 2.

The discussion next focused on the west coast of Africa with Ibrahima Ba, the technical adviser in charge of English language teaching in Senegal. Ba outlined the revision to the national English curriculum that took place in the 1980’s, when emphasis was shifted to communicative methods. He explained how a network of advisers and teachers in eleven regions was created to design exercises and exam formats in line with the new curriculum. The American Center and the

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LaTESOL

Board Positions

LaTESOL encourages you to consider joining the LaTESOL Executive Board. Nominations will be voted on during our upcoming fall conference.



Consider nominating yourself or one of your colleagues. Contact **Jeanne Stacy** at **225-216-8591** or **225-766-7308** or e-mail: **stacyj@mybrcc.edu** for more information. Get on BOARD!

Mini-Grant Thank You

LaTESOL received the following letter from a successful applicant for our Mini Grant. See information below this letter to find out how you can apply for a mini-grant for your school to replace resources lost because of the 2005 hurricanes.

The Hispanic Apostolate goal is to use the minigrant money for the white board and easel as stated in the grant. When I wrote the grant, we didn’t know where we could reopen in New Orleans since our original 2 sites were terribly damaged by the hurricane.

Loyola University graciously gave us classroom space with white boards on the walls through June. We do have a Northshore site that has just opened that needs a white board, and other sites will possibly open next fall. So the Hispanic Apostolate plans on purchasing a white board and easel as soon as we can get another site opened.

Thank you so much for your generosity! We really appreciate it during this time of need.

Peace,

Sr. Robin Richard, OP

LaTESOL Mini-Grants

LaTESOL is accepting applications for ESOL Teacher Post-Hurricane Mini-Grants, small cash awards designed to help supply Louisiana ESOL teachers with lost or needed resources in the aftermath of the 2005 hurricanes.



The deadline for submission of this grant application *has been extended*. Applicants must be members of LaTESOL and currently teaching English as a second language in Louisiana. The application form is online at <http://latesol.org/recoverapp.doc>

Common Thread

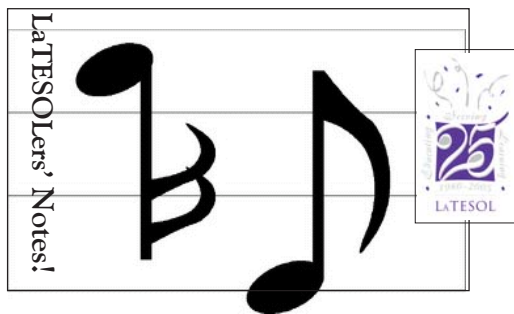
continued from p. 3

British Council actively supported this effort. It took three years to implement the new program throughout Senegal.

The final presenter was Suchada Nimmannit, associate professor at Chulalongkorn University Language Institute in Bangkok, Thailand. Ms. Nimmannit has also served as president of Thailand TESOL and a member of the advisory board of the Thai Ministry of Education. Suchada began by emphasizing the great need for English instruction in a country such as Thailand where 44 million are seeking English language courses. The introduction of English Language Curriculum Standards (ELCS) in 2002 has raised awareness and understanding among both politicians and educators that the success of the new programs depends on the competence of the teachers. Since 2003 emphasis has been on teacher training as it became clear early on that most teachers lacked the proficiency and methodology to implement the ELCS. In 2006, a second revision of standards and a policy of English across the curriculum have resulted in making the teaching of English a national agenda.

At the conclusion of these five presentations, it was strikingly clear that regardless of geographical location, political situation, scope or type of reform, the issues and concerns varied little or not at all. Indeed, every reform discussed focused on three essential issues: a curriculum adapted to students' needs, the resources required to implement said curriculum, and access of teachers to adequate professional preparation and development, for without competent instructors, the first two prove virtually worthless. In summary, this colloquium reinforced the relevance of an organization such as TESOL, whose annual convention provides a valuable forum where dedicated educators from all parts of the world can encounter unparalleled validation, support, and inspiration.

Josette Beaulieu-Grace teaches at St. Joseph Seminary College, St. Benedict, LA, and can be reached at: amazgraces@earthlink.net



Congratulations to **Liz Anderson** who has accepted the position of Coordinator for Foreign Languages and Secondary ESL in Jefferson Parish. She will begin her new position on June 12, 2006.

Instructors Needed For Intensive English Language Program

Metropolitan College of the University of New Orleans has full-time and part-time openings for instructors of English as a Second Language. The successful candidate will be responsible for teaching nonnative speakers basic, intermediate, and advanced levels of English. Must work well with international students in small classes, intensive setting. Master's degree in Education or TESL preferred. Minimal requirement: Bachelor's degree in a related field with at least two years of ESL teaching experience.

Send letter of application, resume, and three letters of reference by May 26, 2006, to

Ms. Elizabeth Anderson, Program Director
Intensive English Language Program
110 Education Bldg., Metropolitan College
University of New Orleans
New Orleans, LA 70148.
Email eanderso@uno.edu

Your Kids Are Blogging; Why Not You?

Liz Anderson

"A blog is a personal diary. A daily pulpit. A collaborative space. A political soapbox. A breaking-news outlet. A collection of links. Your own private thoughts. Memos to the world.

Your blog is whatever you want it to be. There are millions of them, in all shapes and sizes, and there are no real rules.

In simple terms, a blog is a web site, where you write stuff on an ongoing basis. New stuff shows up at the top, so your visitors can read what's new. Then they comment on it or link to it or email you. Or not."

Blogs are typically updated daily using software that allows people with little or no technical background to maintain the blog. That's me!

How will a blog benefit LaTESOLers? We can share professional ideas, concerns, and information. If you are the first person to broach a topic, send your journal to me and I'll post it. Others will be able to respond by going to <http://latesol.blogspot.com/>

Topics LaTESOLers could address include No Child Left Behind, ELDA, SIOP, ESL Certification, IEP issues and more!

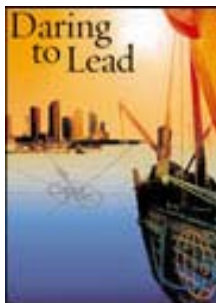
Your kids are blogging; join the fun! Check out the LaTESOL Blogspot.

To find out more about blogging check out: <http://www.blogger.com>, "What's a Blog?" and see related article on p. 6 of this newsletter.

A Newsletter Editor's View of TESOL's 40th Convention

Joanne McMullen

With the combined support of TESOL and LaTESOL, for which I am most appreciative, I had the privilege of attending the 40th Annual TESOL Convention in Tampa, Florida in March 2006. It was, as it always is, a most informative convention with wonderful plenary speakers (including one of our own Louisianians — Keith Folse), stimulating paper sessions and workshops, and it provided an excellent networking opportunity for old friends and new to catch up on the personal and professional aspects of our lives.



One of the sessions I attended in my capacity as our newsletter editor was the Affiliate Editors' Workshop. At this meeting editors of newsletters from TESOL affiliate organizations around the world gathered to discuss, with TESOL administrators, how we could help each other spread the word about our own organizations and about our parent organization, TESOL. One of the concerns that I had, and that the other editors had as well, was that local affiliates have not been allowed to reprint materials from TESOL publications in our own newsletters. As editors, we all understood copyright issues and the need to obtain permissions before reprinting, but we felt it was important for TESOL to provide affiliates with current research articles and materials of interest that would be readily available to our membership through our local newsletters. Our arguments were that by doing so, not only would our members have increased exposure to educational opportunities, the most current research, and practical instructional assistance for ESOL classroom teaching, but local affiliate members would also become more aware of "Big TESOL" and the benefits that they would derive from becoming TESOL members by being able to access TESOL materials.

Our proposal was supported by the local newsletter affiliate representatives and the TESOL administrators present. We drafted a resolution in the workshop that we brought to the Affiliate Assembly the following morning. I present that resolution here:

Support for TESOL Affiliate Editors

WHEREAS, affiliate editors are volunteer leaders with limited resources who represent and serve TESOL, Inc. to affiliate members;

WHEREAS, TESOL has a wealth of materials and information of interest to local affiliates that are unavailable to affiliate newsletters and journals;
THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, THAT TESOL allow local affiliate newsletter and journal editors access to publish TESOL materials and information with the permission of the author and TESOL editor.

continued next column

At the Affiliate Editor's Workshop the local affiliate newsletter editors and the TESOL staff worked together in a spirit of true cooperation. We agreed that there would be added benefits for both TESOL and local affiliates should we be able to share published information. We enthusiastically exchanged email addresses and talked about beginning an exchange of articles with our sister publications. In fact, in this newsletter, you will see the first "sharing" of affiliate materials: INGED (English Language Teachers' Association in Turkey) has asked for and been granted permission to reprint Nancy McKeand's article, "TOEFL iBT" which appeared in our winter 2006 newsletter, and they have allowed us to reprint Suzan Öñiz's article on technology which appears on p. 6 of this newsletter. This exchange, I hope, will be just the first of many exchanges among local affiliates in our efforts to learn from each other.

The wonderful result of our workshop was that the Affiliate Assembly endorsed our resolution at the TESOL Convention, and affiliate editors have just received an email which states that:

By June 1, affiliate editors will have access to identified TESOL materials, ads, and professional development announcements. Information will be stored on the TESOL Web site.

The 40th TESOL Annual Convention was, without a doubt, a newsletter editor's dream!



Free TESOL Membership

A limited number of FREE TESOL memberships (value \$75) are available for LaTESOL members who have never joined TESOL. Contact Jeanne Stacy at stacyj@mybrc.edu

TESOL Position Statements

In March, the TESOL Board of Directors approved two new position statements:

- Position Statement on Adolescent English Language Learners in Adult ESL Programs in the United States; and
- Position Statement Against Discrimination of Nonnative Speakers of English in the Field of TESOL.

These files can be viewed and downloaded from <http://www.tesol.org/PositionStatements>.

Technology In Teaching: Three Ideas To Try Out

Suzan Öniz

This article first appeared in News On-Line, the INGED newsletter, Issue 1, March 2006, and is used by permission of the author and of INGED, the English Language Teachers' Association in Turkey.

Weblogs

The Wikipedia <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weblog>> says the following:

A **blog** is a website in which journal entries are posted on a regular basis and displayed in reverse chronological order. The term blog is a shortened form of **weblog** or **web log**. Authoring a blog, maintaining a blog or adding an article to an existing blog is called "blogging." Individual articles on a blog are called "blog posts," "posts," or "entries." A person who posts these entries is called a "blogger." A blog comprises hypertext, images, and links (to other webpages and to video, audio and other files). Blogs use a conversational style of documentation. Often blogs focus on a particular "area of interest," such as Washington, D.C.'s political goings-on. Some blogs discuss personal experiences.

Blogs can be hosted by dedicated blog hosting services, or they can be run using blog software on regular web hosting services. In the early 21st Century, blogging has quickly emerged as a popular and important means of communication.

WEBLOGS, or blogs, help bloggers share ideas. Users only need to have internet connection and ideas in writing that they want to share. They don't need to know **HTML**!



In the classroom, weblogs can be used as on-line journals, reflective on-line portfolios, pair, group or inter-school conversations; in short, weblogs help interaction with peers and experts. To get free blogging service: Go to any one of the following:

BLOGGER shows you what a blog is and the three steps to start your own blog. <http://www.blogger.com>

KATHY SCHROCK'S KAFFEEKLATSCH Kathy Schrock is a Discovery educator who has created a site for educators showing them how she uses blogs, podcasts and RSS. <http://kathyschrock.blogspot.com>

MSNBC: BLOGS ETC News items from MSNBC, NBC, Newsweek and other media. <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/3032105>

RSS

RSS stands for Real Simple Syndication. It enables authors of any age to syndicate their content. Readers

subscribe to receive their favorite authors' materials through their subscription and without having to do a separate search for each one of the writers. RSS helps the user get the contents in one go. In addition to blogs, the contents may include newspapers, magazines, and searches.

WEBLOGG-ED:RSS Quick Start Guide for Educators: Shows you how to use RSS in the class and more. http://www.weblogg-ed.com/rss_for_ed

BLOGLINES To cast your own blog, to subscribe to others' blogs, email groups, websites and more. <http://bloglines.com>

DISCOVERY NEWS: RSS Sends you news from Discovery Channel, Animal Planet, Travel Channel, TLC. <http://dsc.discovery.com/utilities/rss/rss.html>

VH1RSS For music and movie news. <http://www.vh1.com/rss>

PODCASTS

This is a kind of radio-on-line for which you need to subscribe to a service and own an MP3 player. Podcasting enables you to create voice or audio messages that you can broadcast on the net and to listen to other casts by subscribing to a service. Using iTunes is the most preferred way; then, this software looks for news programs or shows, downloads them to your MP3 player, and you can listen to them whenever or wherever you wish.

Podcasting is one of the top 40 most popular new words according to the online MacMillan English Dictionary <<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/New-Words/050516-podcasting.htm>>, which defines podcasting as:

the creation of Internet-based audio programs which can be automatically downloaded from the Internet onto a device such as an iPod or MP3 player.

In the classroom, students can narrate events, cast interviews, do any kind of audio recording that they can cast either within the school or to other podcasters. Teachers can record lessons to be used for a variety of purposes including sending it to other classes, impaired learners, or absent students.

iTUNES <http://www.apple.com/itunes>

CNN: PODCASTING Best for current events and special programs. <http://www.cnn.com/services/podcasting>

DISCOVERY CHANNEL RADIO: PODCASTS <http://discovery.com/radio/podcasts.html>

THE EDUCATION PODCAST NETWORK Ideal for class podcasts. <http://epnweb.org>

Suzan Öniz, the editor of INEG, the English Language Association in Turkey, can be reached at suzanoni@metu.edu.tr

(See p. 3 to learn about LaTESOL's new Blog site.)

Preparing Students for the Speaking Portion of the TOEFL iBT

Nancy A. McKeand

According to the TOEFL website (www.toefl.org), students are asked to perform six tasks in the speaking section of the Internet Based TOEFL (iBT). In two of these tasks, students are asked to speak about what, hopefully, are familiar topics. In these tasks they use their own knowledge and experience as the basis of the response. For the next two tasks, which are based on short readings and listening passages, test-takers are required to combine information from both sources in their responses. The final type of task is based on a short lecture or conversation, and test takers are to summarize important ideas from the talks in the responses.

Even when our students are comfortable speaking English in academic and non-academic settings, this part of the test may be difficult. While they are allowed to take notes as they read and listen in this section, they are given only 30 seconds afterwards to prepare an oral response lasting up to one minute. In addition, they must speak into a microphone and record their voices on the computer. For some, all this will be a new experience, so it is important that we give students many opportunities to practice these types of activities before the day of the test.

One important aspect of this preparation for the iBT is getting students used to recording their voices. If you use pronunciation software or a variety of other types of programs, your students may already have made short recordings. This is a good way to begin. Students record a word or a sentence at a time and get used to using the microphone and to hearing their recorded voices.

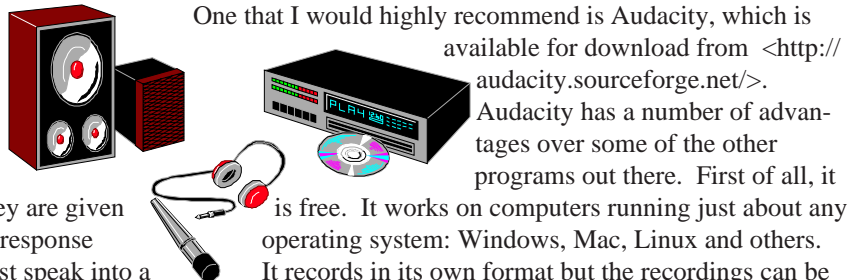
Building on that, another simple way to get students to record their voices is to use the voice recorder built into PowerPoint. If your students are going to make a PowerPoint presentation anyway or if they could make a PowerPoint presentation in your class, consider having them record the audio rather than speaking as they present the slides. This can be done by going to INSERT and clicking on MOVIES AND SOUNDS. One of the choices there is RECORD SOUND. Click on it and a little record box will come up. Hit the record button and you can record the audio for a particular slide. If you prefer, students could record the narration for the entire presentation at once. This is done by going to the SLIDE SHOW button and clicking on RECORD NARRATION. The Help within PowerPoint explains very clearly how to record both the sound for individual slides and for the narration.

Windows XP has a built in voice recorder, as well. It saves files in the WAV format, which can be played back in Windows Media Player. To access this, go to START, ALL PROGRAMS, ACCESSORIES, ENTERTAINMENT, SOUND RECORDER. This will allow you to record and save up to one minute of audio. A tutorial on how to do this can be found at Randall's ESL Listening Lab at

<http://www.esl-lab.com/handouts/soundrecordings.pdf>.

This program could be useful if you wanted students to practice TOEFL-type responses; you could have students read an article, for example, and then record an oral summary of what they had read. The time limit built into this method of recording would help students learn to express themselves well in one minute so that they will be better able to give a concise response when they are taking the TOEFL.

If you want to do more sophisticated recordings or if you want to do lots of editing, you will need a different program. One that I would highly recommend is Audacity, which is available for download from <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>.



Audacity has a number of advantages over some of the other programs out there. First of all, it is free. It works on computers running just about any operating system: Windows, Mac, Linux and others.

It records in its own format but the recordings can be exported as MP3s or WAV files, depending on which you prefer, so you have flexibility in how you can listen to your finished project. Also, you can do real audio editing with Audacity if you have a need or desire to do that.

The only real drawback to Audacity is that if you want to convert Audacity files to MP3s or WAV files, you must also download another program, LAME MP3 encoder. While this may sound complicated, it is really pretty simple. You can find a link to the program from the Audacity download page above, or you can go directly to <http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~raa110/audacity/lame.html>. There is a good tutorial there. More help can be found at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/tutorials> and <http://digilogue.net/audacity/>.

It is not just in a listening/speaking or pronunciation class that recording software can be used. I have used Audacity with my students in Writing class to help with editing. I have asked my students to record themselves reading their own papers aloud and then listen to see if they can identify portions that just don't sound right. In a reading class, students could also be asked to record their responses to a reading or a summary of an article. Even in grammar class, students might be asked to record something. With a little creativity, it should be possible to find a number of very natural ways to include student recordings in any of your classes.

Regardless of the classes we teach and the computer programs we choose to use, the important thing is that we give our students the opportunity to become comfortable speaking extemporaneously and recording their voices on the computer. We want to give them every advantage when they go to take the TOEFL iBT.

Nancy A. McKeand teaches at St. Joseph Seminary College, St. Benedict, LA, and can be reached at: nmckeand@sjasc.edu

2006 LaTESOL Officers & Executive Board

President

Jeanne Stacy
917 Bourbon Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70808
225-766-7308 (h); 225-216-8591 (w)
stacyj@mybrcc.edu

Past President

Susan Ary
7818 Sycamore
New Orleans, LA 70118
504-862-9233 (h); 504-280-5532 (w)
skary@uno.edu

Historian/Parliamentarian

Edith Babin
6040 Boone Dr.
Baton Rouge, LA 70808
225-766-0420 (h); 225-578-3041 (w)
enbabin@lsu.edu

First Vice-President/Conference Chair

Mary Klaus
210 Pembroke Lane
Lafayette, LA 70580
337-991-0272 (h)
maryklaus1@msn.com

Secretary

Betty Speyrer
4735 Government St.
Baton Rouge, LA 70806
225-216-1263 (h); 504-237-1093 (w)
bspeyrer@cox.net

Members-At-Large (2003-'05)

Susan Bégat, LSU
sbegat@lsu.edu
Gloria Gladman, LSU
gsmith1@lsu.edu
Christine Lyons, Tulane
clyons3531@yahoo.com

Second Vice-President/Membership Chair/ Newsletter Editor

Joanne McMullen, Ph.D.
6942 Frontier Dr.
Greenwell Springs, LA 70739
225-261-3556 (h); 225-578-5227 (w)
jmcnull@lsu.edu

Treasurer

Elizabeth Anderson
2239 St. Nick
New Orleans, LA 70131
504-394-7694 (h)
eanderso@cox.net

Members-At-Large (2004-'06)

Ken Lemoine, New Orleans Public Schools
kalemoine1@cox.net
Josette Beaulieu-Grace, St. Joseph Sem. Coll.
amazgraces@earthlink.net

Liaison Officer

Georgette Ioup, Ph.D.
4678 Eastern St.
New Orleans, LA 70122
504-288-2182 (h); 504-280-6141 (w)
gioup@uno.edu



LaTESOL

**2239 St. Nick
New Orleans, LA 70131**

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