

Department of Applied Linguistics

2008 Spring Newsletter
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IELP student Alyaa Barzanji with IELP instructors, Lisa McKinney and Gwen Heller Tuason

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The IELP: A Student's Perspective

by Alyaa Barzanji

The Intensive English Language Program (IELP) and the Department of Applied Linguistics have long shared an office in East Hall and are steadily integrating many activities as their organizational merger continues. In this issue, we focus on the IELP, whose enrollment has nearly doubled in the last two years. Who better to provide an insider's perspective to the IELP than a student who has spent the last two years studying here at PSU? Here is Alyaa's story:

My name is Alyaa Barzanji, and I am from Saudi Arabia. I came to Portland in the summer of 2006. The main reason that I came here was because my husband and I wanted to complete our studies with a Master's degree. Before starting a Master's program I had to pass the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) with a high score which was very hard for me because English is my second language. I was very happy that I could learn English, but I
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Letter from the Chair



This is a very exciting time in the Department of Applied Linguistics. We are hitting our stride in an ongoing process of integrating our Intensive English Language Program (IELP) with our academic programs for undergraduate, certificate and graduate students. Finding ways to cross-fertilize the expertise of the faculty and staff across these programs is a complex but very rewarding process. Our certificate and MA TESOL programs help prepare ESOL teachers and our IELP engages ESOL teachers in a state-of-art instructional program. There ought to be and we're finding many ways to collaborate across these activities. MA TESOL students serve as teaching assistants, as intern teachers and as tutors and conversation partners within the IELP. Faculty from the IELP teach LING courses in instructional Methods, Community Practicum and other courses. The faculties are collaborating on a growing mix of research and professional development activities, such as with our Lab School, our Learner Web project and other activities. IELP and Applied Ling faculty also work closely together to guide graduate students' culminating Thesis and Project experiences.

It gives me great pleasure to announce two new tenure-track faculty who we will be welcoming in the fall. Dr. Nike Arnold, currently at the University of Tennessee, will be joining our faculty as Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics. Dr. John Hellermann, who has been with us for several years as an outstanding research faculty, will be joining the tenure-track as Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics. The additional permanent faculty lines our department has acquired over the past several years will enable us to offer a new PhD program in Applied Linguistics. A doctoral program proposal is currently going through the first of several levels of review within the university and state system.

- Steve Reder, Department Chair



Department of Applied Linguistics
Stephen Reder, Department Chair

Intensive English Language Program
Judy Reed, Program Director

IELP: A Student's Perspective (continued from p.1)

was worried about the place that I would study. My husband told me that, luckily, the IELP is one of the best programs in Portland. Therefore, I registered, and from then on my story started in the IELP.

I was glad that I started at the first of the five levels. Each level has four classes which helped me to learn the basics in writing, grammar, reading, and speaking and listening. Also, the program offers elective classes which helped me to improve my skills in order to be able to pass the TOEFL.

The IELP is known for its excellent faculty who are one of the major reasons for the program's success. I have been taught by 16 expert teachers, and I will never forget any of them. Do you want to know why? Simply, because despite the differences in their characteristics and personalities, they are friendly, exciting, and willing to teach each student from their hearts. In addition to the teachers, there are many classmates from different nationalities who have become my friends that I also will never forget.

My experience in the IELP has been full of happy times and hard work. The happy times were when I was celebrating with my husband and my friends at the end of each term because of the good grades that I earned, especially in the last term when I got an award from the IELP for having a 4.0 GPA at my graduation from the program.

On the other hand, I have had to work hard because of my intention to be an "A" student. In fact, to have a 4.0 GPA was not easy. It took many things such as staying at home most of the weekends to achieve this goal, and I think any student who really wants this can get it, but with some hard work. Therefore, in class, I was participating, attending all the classes, asking the teacher to repeat the important information, and handing in all my homework on the due date. In addition, outside of class, I had to study every day, do my homework, prepare for the next class, do additional exercises on the Internet, practice more in the learning center, and go to the teachers during their office hours to ask about unclear information.

Furthermore, besides the professional and powerful teaching in the IELP, there is the administrative side which is no less important than the teaching side. The administrative services are divided into two parts. One is responsible for the I-20s and immigration advising, and the other one is responsible for student records which include grades and class schedules. Both



IELP students and faculty on an excursion to Mt. Hood

of these services help and support students in many different ways. For example, when I have needed assistance in my immigration status, I have always gone to see one of the wonderful advisors, Michele Miller, who helped me find the best solution. I also was helped by Susan Westby and Shingo Hamada who are responsible for the support staff who are the "backbone" of the IELP.

Indeed, I feel that I have gained many advantages from this experience: confidence in my conversation and academic English, friendships, and my new interests in reading and writing. Also, I am very happy being an international student because I had the honor and the opportunity to meet all of these wonderful people.

IELP AT A GLANCE

- OREGON'S OLDEST AND LARGEST UNIVERSITY-BASED ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM
- CURRENTLY SERVES 370 STUDENTS FROM 29 COUNTRIES, FROM ALGERIA TO MEXICO TO VIETNAM AND BEYOND
- OFFERS 5 LEVELS OF INSTRUCTION BY 42 INSTRUCTORS IN GRAMMAR, WRITING, READING AND LISTENING/SPEAKING, PREPARING STUDENTS FOR UNIVERSITY-LEVEL COURSEWORK IN ENGLISH

TESOL 2008, NYC

This past April several students and faculty attended the annual Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Convention in New York City, broadening PSU's visibility in the wide world of TESOL education and research. Representing our department as presenters were:

YOU-TUBE: U TROUBLE?

John Armbrust & Alexandria Cesar

EFFECTIVE READING STRATEGIES FOR RESEARCH WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Julie Haun & Nancy Dollahite

WOMEN'S FORUMS: NAVIGATING COLLEGE LIFE AND CULTURE

Ann Singer, Anne Greenhoe, & Kellie Gallagher

THE VIKING CORPUS OF STUDENT ACADEMIC WRITING

Linnea Spitzer

TEACHING EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

Olesya Kisselev

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ORTESOL Spring Symposium

To share their experiences presenting at TESOL and to encourage more students and professionals in the field to attend and present at TESOL conventions, two graduate students, Linnea Spitzer and Olesya Kisselev, and three IELP faculty members, Ann Singer, Kellie Gallagher and Anne Greenhoe, along with PCC instructor Luciana Diniz, presented at the ORTESOL (Oregon TESOL affiliate) Spring Symposium on May 3, 2008.

The presenters talked about how to participate in the TESOL Graduate Forum, how to apply for and develop presentations, what to expect as a TESOL presenter, where to find funds to sponsor trips to conventions, and more!

The event was co-sponsored by SOAL and was designed to promote, among other things, cooperation between students of Applied Linguistics and professionals in the field of TESOL.

The symposium received a warm welcome from more than 60 attendees. The organizer of the symposium, Sara Kuehlhorn, a recent MA TESOL graduate at PSU, hopes that even more students and teachers will present at TESOL 2009 in Denver!



ORTESOL Spring Symposium Organizers and Presenters

Conferences & Events

14th Annual Conference on Language, Interaction and Culture
May 22-24, 2008
University of California, Los Angeles
*Deadline for proposals has passed

Canadian Association for Applied Linguistics Conference
June 4 - 6, 2008*
Vancouver, B.C.
*Deadline for proposals has passed

31st Annual Second Language Research Forum
October 17-19, 2008*
University of Hawaii at Manoa
*Deadline for proposals has passed

The International Association for the Integrational Study of Language and Communication, in collaboration with The Amsterdam Center for Language and Communication present an international symposium: "The Native Speaker and the Mother Tongue"
December 11-13, 2008*
Cape Town, South Africa
*Proposal Deadline: July 31, 2008

Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting
January 8-11, 2009*
Portland, Oregon
*Deadline for proposals has passed

American Association for Applied Linguistics Annual Conference
March 21-24, 2009*
Denver, Colorado
*Proposal Deadline: August 15, 2008

2009 TESOL Convention
March 25-28, 2009*
Denver, Colorado
*Proposal Deadline: June 2, 2008

Pearls of Wisdom

Current students and graduates of the Applied Linguistics department share their tips and tricks for excelling in the programs. Following are excerpts from Laurie Wayne's compilation of alumni wisdom.

Lesson One: Don't go it alone!

The most important thing we'd like you to know is that it's really important to develop a cohort and to learn to work well in groups. Find yourself one or more "study buddies" in each class – you'll find that you will get a lot more out of your classes and make friends, too. The people you are in class with and study with are among your first professional contacts. Even folks who have finished the program are often still in contact with many of their study buddies, sharing experiences, problems and ideas.

Lesson Two: Use learning resources

Come to events sponsored by SOAL, the Student Organization of Applied Linguistics. They host talks, "get to know your professor" teas, and "First Friday" social events. Join the "LingForum" mailing list – it's an "almost-anything-goes" list for general banter and noodling about linguistics. There are so many incredible resources available to you at PSU! Applied linguistics has a subject librarian in the library. Librarians are happy to take plenty of time to help students learn how to do things that we wouldn't, perhaps, want to admit to our professors that we don't already know how to do. You'll need to learn and use exact APA notation for your papers – the Writing Center and the Skills Enhancement and Tutoring Center on campus are staffed with free, excellent writing tutors and references.

Lesson Three: Navigate Bureaucracy and Program Logistics

One of the best, easiest things you can do for yourself in the program is to join the "AppLing" mailing list. It's painless to give yourself access to this gold mine of announcements and information from and about our department – from thesis defenses to departmental deadlines and more. Get to know your advisor and don't be afraid to ask questions. Before you get too far into the program, get familiar with the requirements of the MATESOL program and the class offerings. Every term, you'll be making decisions that will influence your career, your bank account, and your schedule for completing your degree. Planning a two year plan with your advisor right off the bat can be a good idea, but you should remember that the class schedules and your own priorities may change over a two year period.

Lesson Four: Learning Teaching

The study and especially practice of teaching is a critical component of the program, and integrating it successfully into your experience at PSU will be an important job for you. Luckily, there is plenty of teaching to be done! Teach as much as possible while you are in the program. Take a teaching job, volunteer teach, volunteer tutor. Observe as much as possible different levels and settings. Get in real classrooms, take notes, ask questions, get syllabi from the teachers if you can. Make and treasure friends among the IELP teachers... They are on the front line every day. You will gain more useful knowledge volunteering to help one of them than you will in most of your "core" courses.

Lesson Five: Staying happy, healthy, solvent, and sane:

Come to think of it, this might be the most important lesson of all. Many of us in the program are working to balance jobs, family commitments, and other pressures. Make sure you get exercise, plenty of good food and water, and, well, as much rest as you can. Yes, it's hard to take care of yourself because you may feel like you don't have time. Do it anyway!

Finally:

This will give you a good start, but we have a lot more advice for you – just ask! We'll be happy to share our wisdom and experiences. If there is any advice you find here that is especially helpful or unhelpful, note it and help to make the next version better. We've done our best to give you our best pearls of wisdom. There's one more we'll include here: Don't forget to have fun!

"The purpose of this project, encouraged by Steve Reder, was to gather the experience and knowledge of those who had been in the MA-TESOL program for a few months or a few years, or had already completed it and were working in the field. The resulting document should prove helpful to new and current students, and as an additional benefit, serves to encourage a virtual cohort of students who embrace a culture of learning and helping each other."

- Laurie Wayne

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Department of Applied Linguistics

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news at www.ling.pdx.edu

Graduate students of Methods II

in conjunction with the Department of Applied Linguistics

present the Spring 2008 Graduate Student Conference

June 9 and 10, 2008

East Hall

Agenda and rooms to be announced.

Attention Students: Want to get more involved in the department? Want to gain experience writing, editing and publishing materials? Come help create the departmental newsletter. Contact kisselev@pdx.edu for more information.

Calling all alumni, faculty, staff and friends of the department:

What's new? Have you published a book, received an award, launched an exciting research project, found a new job, sold your Subaru? Do you have suggestions for future issues? Whatever the news, we want to hear about it. Share your goings-on with us at kisselev@pdx.edu or 503-725-9198.