As editors of *The CATESOL Journal* we are delighted to introduce the first issue. The change from *Occasional Papers* to the publication of an annual journal reflects the growth of our professional organization, growth in both stature and number of members.

The articles reflect the breadth of interest areas of the membership. This issue includes articles on language history (Nichols), refugees (Welaratna), writing (Casanave; Roy and Mano), content instruction (Addison), demographics (Fox and Wiley; Gosak), and syntax (Hubbard and Hix).

Of course, this journal would not be possible without the high quality of the contributions. These contributions will make the journal an important addition to other journals in the field of ESL through its focus on classroom teaching.

We look forward to beginning work on the next issue.

Denise Murray
Dorothy Messerschmitt
Editors

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English As a Bridge Between Cultures: Scotland, Carolina, and California

This paper examines the function of holy texts in unifying diverse societies. Scotland and South Carolina, usually considered to be monolingual and homogeneous societies, are compared with contemporary multicultural California. How Scotland and South Carolina used specific written texts to unify peoples speaking many languages is discussed, with implications for California. The established church and school in Scotland, the competing churches and schools in Carolina, and the public school system in California are examined as agents in social and language change. The texts that might serve as unifying ones for a society like that of contemporary California are discussed, as well as the central role of educators in choosing texts that express shared social and spiritual values.

As a teacher of prospective high school English Teachers, I often ask my students to participate in a Language Heritage exercise. In it, they first list the important points in their personal language history and then write an essay on their family language history—stretching as far back as their families have provided data in the form of stories and incidental memories (Heisch, Lamendella & Nichols, 1987). I do this because I have learned to expect diverse language backgrounds among Californians. Even those who are not immediately aware of the diversity within their own families become intrigued with the backgrounds of their classmates, as I ask groups from different language backgrounds to form panels and discuss their language experiences together and invite questions from the class. Sometimes, by the end of the course, students miraculously remember hearing about a Native American woman on one side of their family tree. Some suddenly remember speaking Yiddish as children. A larger number wonder at the silence in their families about what must have been rich German language backgrounds. Many make pilgrimages to the elders in their families to ask, before it is too late, who spoke what to whom—and how often, in what circumstances. Occasionally a student takes advantage of the miracles of modern technology to videotape a mother and a grandmother talking together in the ancestral and the adopted languages. Always this exercise in getting in touch with personal roots illuminates and educates before we move on to the abstractions of...