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Stephanie Vandrick, Johnnie Johnson Hafernik,
and Dorothy S. Messerschmitt

This paper advocates closer and more systematic attention to ethical issues which, because of the various cultural and religious backgrounds of ESL students, are particular to the field of ESL. Two broad sets of issues are discussed. The first set, responsibilities of faculty members, can be further subdivided into faculty-student interactions, and includes such topics as confidentiality, advice giving, political discussion, and tutoring. The second set, ethical systems in conflict, focuses on three areas: gift giving, plagiarism and cheating, and interaction with government and other outside institutions. Cautions are given regarding respecting cultural differences, understanding complicating factors such as gender and class, and acknowledging ambiguities in all ethical systems.

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Become Effective Self-Editors?..... 41

Dana Ferris

Today’s ESL writing teachers and students as well as content-area professors and textbook publishers generally agree that systematic attention to accuracy in student writing is both necessary and possible, even in a process-oriented composition classroom. The author has developed an integrated approach to teaching editing skills to advanced ESL writing students. The present study investigates the effectiveness of this approach.

A group of 30 students in two sections of a semester-long ESL freshman composition course were taught systematically to identify, prioritize, and attempt to correct their most serious and frequent errors. Their compositions were collected throughout the semester (3 to 5 papers per student, for a total of 136 essays), and analyzed to see if they were able, over the course of the semester, to reduce the number of errors they made. The results showed that most students were successful in reducing their overall percentages of error; further, significant differences in their performance on in-class versus out-of-class writing were noted.

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Vanessa Wenzell and Anna Eleftheriou

This exploratory study examines the attitudes of 125 limited English proficient (LEP) students in an inner city middle school in Los Angeles. Although these students have completed bilingual or ESL programs in elementary school, they enter middle school with poor English literacy skills—all scoring below the 36th percentile on the Total Reading and Total Language parts of the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). A teacher-researcher team conducted a survey to see if students’ attitudes would provide insights into their poor literacy skills. The study probes attitudes toward using English in the classroom—feelings about class, peers, and parental involvement—and learning goals. The paper describes findings in which students’ positive attitudes toward English and school contrast with negative attitudes toward parent and teacher involvement and a limited awareness of literacy difficulties. Further, students’ attitudes contribute to their maintaining an environment limited to the fossilized English input of peers. The authors provide suggestions for working with students’ attitudes and for heightening literacy awareness.

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