

Promoting research and effective practices in English language education for the global knowledge economy in the 21st century

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Panelists to Discuss Regional Perspectives on English at TESOL 2011

Once again the TESOL Convention will include a panel presentation by TIRF Board members about an issue of current concern for the Foundation. This year's presentation is entitled "Regional Perspectives on English: Current Status and Future Trends." The panel members will address the current status of English and predict future trends in various parts of Asia, Europe, Africa, and Latin America. Issues include promoting research and best practices to improve the use of English in the global knowledge economy.

David Nunan (Vice President for Academic Affairs, Anaheim University) will be the panel moderator. The panelists will be Michael Carrier (Head, English Language Innovation, British Council), Jun Liu (Professor and Head of the English Department, University of Arizona), and Ana Sylvia Ramirez (Chief Executive Officer / CEO, Educational and Cultural Manager, Guatemalan American Institute).



David Nunan



Ana Sylvia Ramirez



Jun Liu



Michael Carrier

The panel presentation will be held from 10-11:45 AM on Thursday, March 17 in Room 209, Ernest M. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. Coffee and tea will be served for TIRF's guests.

Generous Cambridge Donation Ensures Viability of DDG Program

TIRF's Board of Trustees is pleased to announce that Cambridge University Press and Cambridge ESOL will continue to support TIRF's Doctoral Dissertation Grants program. These two parts of the University of Cambridge will contribute a total of \$25,000 each year for the next three years. According to Christine Nutall, Director of Communications and Stakeholder Relations for Cambridge, "We are delighted to be able to assist TIRF's excellent work in supporting doctoral research in this important field."

TIRF's Board of Trustees extends its deep gratitude to Cambridge University Press and Cambridge ESOL, and to Stephen Bourne and Hanri Pierrese, for spear-heading this generous donation. These funds will help to support research by doctoral students from around the world over the next three years.

Donna Christian Receives Prestigious Award



Donna Christian (right) poses with Sarah Thomason while accepting the Victoria A. Fromkin Prize

In January 2011, Donna Christian, TIRF trustee and senior fellow at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in Washington, D.C., received the Victoria A. Fromkin Lifetime Service Award from the Linguistic Society of America (LSA). Originally presented in 2001 as the Victoria A. Fromkin Prize for Distinguished Service, this award was established "to recognize individuals who have performed extraordinary service to the Society and the discipline throughout their career."

Christian has focused her career on the role of language in education, and has special interests in second language learning, dialect diversity, and policy. Commenting on receiving the award, Christian said, "I am deeply honored and grateful to receive this recognition from the Linguistic Society of America, especially in an award dedicated to Vicki Fromkin, whose leadership and service made such a difference to the field of linguistics and to the LSA."

LSA Director of Membership and Meetings, David Robinson, said that Christian was awarded the Victoria A Fromkin Prize for her outstanding service to the LSA since joining in 1971. Over the years, Christian has served the LSA in a variety of ways, and helped navigate CAL through difficult financial times. Robinson commented that the *Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* calls Christian "one of the 'foremost authorities in the United States on language education and language in education.'" Christian's work between CAL and the LSA helped to ensure a mutually beneficial and prosperous relationship between the two organizations for many years. Thus, as Robinson stated, "it is fitting that LSA recognize her long-standing service and contributions both to the linguistics profession and to the LSA as an organization."

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TIRF

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Kathleen Bailey,
Chair of TIRF

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A Typical Day as TIRF's Administrative Assistant



Ryan Damerow

Editor's Note:

Ryan Damerow is a graduate student in TESOL at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. He also is completing the

Certificate in Language Program Administration while he works part-time for TIRF. Damerow served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Chongqing, China where he taught English as a foreign language and Intercultural Communication.

The amount of work and responsibility required of my position as the administrative assistant for TIRF is the workload any other for-profit business would have at least three employees completing. Needless to say, the life of the only employee of a relatively small nonprofit organization presents a number of challenging opportunities. What makes it possible for me to ensure that routine activities and ongoing projects are completed can be explained by two reasons. First, working alongside TIRF President, Kathi Bailey, has always been a positive, motivating, and fun experience. Secondly, I believe in TIRF's mission and I recognize board members' commitment to the profession. They are passionate about the volunteer work they do.

What's great about working for TIRF is that I am able to draw on my educational background to provide contextual knowledge to support a number of TIRF activities. For example, with Kathi Bailey, I gave a presentation at the 2010 CATESOL convention in Santa Clara, California, based on TIRF's research about plurilingualism in multinational corporations. During the presentation we explored the role English plays in the international workforce. Additionally, by drawing on coursework I have completed related to language program administration, I have been able to review internal financial documents and report to Kathi, which assists her in making financial decisions.

A typical day as TIRF's administrative assistant requires a great deal of attention to detail, multi-tasking skills, prioritizing time-sensitive jobs, and liaising with board members around the world as well as with our various constituencies, and so much more. The following are just a few tasks that I engage in during a typical TIRF day.

9am – Go through tasks left by Kathi while she is teaching. Check TIRF's website for applications submitted and comments made by visitors. Check email for general inquiries, donations, and other types of correspondence.

10am – Meet with Kathi. Set agenda for the day. Complete time-sensitive work (e.g., producing the newsletter,

responding to questions from applicants, organizing proposals, and liaising among board members).

11am – Complete routine work (photocopying, proofreading, mailing, faxing, updating donor list, editing Moodle, creating promotional public relations pieces for the website relevant to TIRF's current projects, arranging for bank deposits and outgoing wire transfers, etc.).

1pm – Work on special projects that are not time sensitive (e.g., YouTube video editing, SlideShare slidecasts, Google Analytics data, donor outreach, working on TIRF's Adwords campaign, and so on.).

3pm – Meet with Kathi: Wrap-up the day's tasks, ensure she has followed-up with tasks she needed to complete, plan for the next day; if time, teach her something about website management.

4pm – Leave the office.

Working for TIRF is a unique opportunity for me because I am able to use my education as a basis to inform my opinions and provide feedback to board members, while at the same time, I am able to draw upon my multimedia skills to promote visibility for TIRF and ensure smooth operations on a daily basis. I believe in the work TIRF is committed to, trust that we are making a difference in peoples' lives, and hope that we, as an organization, will continue to grow and serve the public as we have in the past.

Online Donations Through Google Checkout

We at TIRF have been experiencing problems with our system for online donations made by people living in the United Kingdom and the United States. Google Checkout is the platform TIRF uses for US and UK online donors. Unfortunately, at least three people thought they had made donations via Google Checkout but then found that those donations were not reflected in their bank statements.

After arriving at www.tirfonline.org/donate/, a donation can be successfully made through Google Checkout by first clearing the field where the amount is to be entered and then typing the amount of the donation without using the dollar sign (\$). Next, the donor should click on the blue "Donate" button. The following screen will ask the donor to sign into their Google account. Donors who do not have Google accounts may follow the steps on the screen to create an account and complete the transaction. Google accounts are free to create and maintain.

Our method of handling online donations is to contact the donor by email shortly after the donation is made, with notification that the donation has been received. Donors will then be sent a formal letter of acknowledgment in the mail a few days later, depending on where they live. If you believe that you have made a donation but your bank account was not charged and you have not received an email or letter from TIRF recognizing your donation, then your donation was probably not processed. Please contact us at info@tirfonline.org as we want to hear from you about any difficulties you may have had in making a contribution to TIRF.

Report from the Chair — An Invitation to Join Us in New Orleans

As you can see from the lead story in this month's newsletter, we are gearing up for an exciting panel presentation by TIRF Board members at the upcoming TESOL Convention in New Orleans. The theme for this year's convention is "Examining the E in TESOL" – a phrase which could mean many things to many people. To me it means a chance to take a closer look at not only the English language in all its intricacies in use – Gee's (1999) "little d discourse." It is also a time to

reflect upon the greater social practices combined with language which make up "big D discourse." Our panelists will take a regional perspective on English language issues in discussing these larger matters.

I am grateful to our three panelists and to David Nunan for organizing the content of the presentation. I am also very grateful to TIRF Trustee Mary Ann Christison, who has made arrangements for a coffee and tea service (thanks to some loyal donors)

to accompany the session. Thanks are also due to John Segota and Lisa Dyson at TESOL's Central Office, who graciously gave us a long time-slot, so that we will have ample time for discussion and networking. We hope to see you there!

Gee, J. P. (1999). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. London: Routledge.

Kathi Bailey