



The Language of Freedom in Albania

by Portia Williams (1995)

When I first walked into an Albanian classroom, there seemed to be a whirlwind of confusion. Chairs were screeching and scraping across the floor. Girls were giggling and tugging at their dresses. Boys were hooting, and straightening the collars of their bomber jackets. And notebooks were flying everywhere. A bit dazed, I started to move quickly toward the teaching podium at the front of the class. But before I could reach my destination, the room fell silent. Surprised, I turned around to face them; and what I saw was a room full of students looking directly at me, standing proudly at attention.

The genuine surprise I felt that day typified my two-year experience as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the country of Albania. As an EFL instructor, I expected to arrive at the University of Shkodra, meet other faculty members, find my classroom, and begin my normal needs assessment activities. I had heard many stories about the Albanian school system and its teaching practices, and because of this, I had notions about the kinds of problems this assessment would turn up. It didn't take long, however, for me to realize that most of my assumptions were wrong.

The most overwhelming surprise for me was the communicative skills held by most of my students. Albania had been closed off to the world for 50 years, so the majority of them had never met a native speaker before I walked into their classrooms. Further, the English they got from television was not only limited to CNN and more recently,

NBC news, but when I arrived they had only had access to outside media for a few years.

Yet, these students had a command of the language that rivaled ESL graduate students at the University of Illinois. They spoke, comprehended, and communicated the language in a way that not only shocked me, but sent me reeling back to my textbooks for an explanation. How is it possible, I wondered. They have no teacher training, a few out-dated materials, and grammar translation is the main method of instruction. This place is a mess...so why aren't their language skills?

The main answer to my question was motivation. As I began to work among Albanians and learn more about their culture, I discovered that language—especially in the northern Shkodra region—was used as a freedom tool, a weapon against Communism. During Enver Hoxha's reign, families would sit in the dark by their radios with the volume turned just above a whisper, and listen to whichever Italian or Greek station they could get. In the dark, they would also rig their TV set antennas to receive any news from the outside world. Then, quietly and with passion, they listened and learned.

The ability to communicate was power, and power was freedom. In Communist-era Albania, to own an actual language textbook, was to own one's destiny. And to own an English book was to own the world.

Linking language with freedom helped Albanians overcome the usual barriers



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associated with second language learning. Indeed, knowing an additional language was so coveted that it became a yardstick by which teachers and professors were measured and promoted within the new, democratic educational system. For example, to be promoted from the equivalent of assistant to associate professor, one had to learn an additional language; and with more languages under one's belt, one could be promoted even higher.

By the time I arrived in 1995, academic research had already been introduced as a method for advancement with the university system. But even so, most University of Shkodra faculty members still had their research papers translated to English and other languages to show their commitment to communication, to Albania's globalization.

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Greetings From the Acting Director

Dr. Larry Bouton

Hello and Happy Holidays!

We have just finished what seemed to be the fastest moving semester in my 29 years here at UIUC. The highlight of the fall, of course, was the wonderful and exciting celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first ESL courses offered on campus and of our 30th year as a MATESL program.

But that was only the beginning. No sooner was our party over than we had to begin work on a detailed three-year plan for our department. In effect, we had to decide who we are, who we want to be, and how we want to get there. That process gave us a good look at the richness of the program we now have.

Even though we are a small unit, or maybe because of it, we are often too busy to be aware of what everyone else is doing. It was amazing, for example, to find out how far we have come in our efforts to apply ESP principles to our ESL program so as to meet the specific needs of international students in different disciplines. Right now we offer specialized courses to the Executive Development Center, the MS program in Policy Economics, the local branch of the University of Illinois Medical School, and we are well on the way to such a relationship with the MBA program. We hope eventually to have ESP oriented to the sciences and engineering, and maybe others. Not only are we serving the campus better than ever before, but we are also offering at least some of our MATESL candidates experience in needs analysis, program development, and teaching in an ESP setting.

Our goal is to be among the leaders in ESP in the US both in the English language programs we offer on- and off- campus and in the preparation of our graduates to provide high-quality programs elsewhere.

So that is some of what we are doing. How about you? Let us know how you are and what is going on with you in your part of the world. In fact, we will soon be writing to ask some of you what you thought of our MATESL program while you were here and what you think now. What changes would you make and what would you keep the same? We need to know!

We'll be in touch. Until then, enjoy!

l-bouton@uiuc.edu ■

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This attitude toward globalization made both my teaching and development work in Albania easier than I had expected. There were problems, of course: The university's English department was only two years old and struggling to find its way. There were numerous course titles, but no course descriptions; numerous books for teachers, but none for students; numerous ideas for instruction, but no avenues for implementation. Nevertheless, faculty members remained motivated and committed to innovation.

Among those things accomplished during my term were the initiation of a new four-year curriculum designed to meet the long-term academic and career needs of Albanian English language students, and the creation of a Business English Department directly linked to the university's new, USAID-funded business school. During my

second year in Albania, I also worked for the Department of Education, allowing me to assess educational needs on a much broader scale. And again, I met with a basic love for language and a desire to improve. Because of this, I was able, eventually, to overcome obstacles and to develop training measures for the improvement of English language programs throughout the entire Shkodra District.

In March, all Americans were evacuated from Albania because of civil unrest. Vast numbers of people throughout the country had lost money, and for some, life savings in government-sanctioned pyramid schemes. When I left, there was still a great deal of work to be done. But I have every confidence that when the country's back on track, English education will be too. *portiaaw@erols.com* ■

Faculty Update

Professor **Fred Davidson** (1981) will be on sabbatical next semester at the University of Melbourne in Australia. His UIUC email address will reach him there: *fgd@uiuc.edu*

Professor **Susan Taylor** (1967) retired "officially" in May. Continuing to teach advanced writing part-time as mentor for international graduate students enrolled in ESL 402 and 403, Professor Taylor is also

engaged with UIUC Housing Division staff and students in developing English language conversation links between undergraduates and international student spouses. She notes that "one of the joys of retirement has been having time to participate fully in this year's celebration of DEIL's 50th anniversary." Professor Taylor was one of the eight recipients of the first MATESL degrees awarded in 1967. *taylorst@uiuc.edu*

Alumni Update

Glenn Deckert (1970) has just completed his fourth year and received tenure at the Associate Professor level in the Department of Foreign Languages, ESL/ TESOL Section, at Eastern Michigan University. He spent the past two summers at the Pedagogical University of Dushanbe, Tajikistan, teaching English majors and prospective ESL teachers. *fla_deckert@online.emich.edu*

Arline Thornton (1974) has been teaching Spanish in the Norfolk, Virginia, public schools for the last four years. She also has her own business called *Se Habla Español* (Spanish translating and interpreting) and *Communicate: Write!* (technical, business, legal, and academic writing). She says that she is immersed in computers: "I regularly go online and search the Internet

across the world. It's interesting, but time-consuming." *SeHabla123@aol.com*

Joan Friedenberg (1975) is professor of linguistics at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. She married Mark Schneider, professor of sociology at SIU, in May 1996. *jfrieden@siu.edu*

Naomi Jakobsson (1979) was recently named interim executive director of A Woman's Fund, a local non-profit organization dedicated to preventing sexual assault and helping victims of domestic violence. She previously held the position of Champaign County Recorder.

Carol Knipscheer (1979) keeps herself busy as the Director of the IEP at the University of Central Arkansas and as the interim director of international programs.

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DEIL's 50th Reunion

October 17 - 18, 1997

Our 50th: A Memorable Gathering

by Wayne Dickerson

With the central atrium of the Foreign Languages Building bedecked at each end with 30-foot hanging banners announcing DEIL's 50th anniversary, walls decorated with pictures and memorabilia from our decades, and tables down the central isle mushrooming with foods from every corner of the globe, DEIL began two days of looking back and looking forward, of being proud of where we've been and where we are. Fifty is a lot of years to celebrate! But we did our best.

A welcoming ceremony in Ellis Lounge late Friday afternoon was a fitting start, with greetings from Associate Provosts David Liu and Susan Gonzo, and a special recognition and appreciation of Mary Hussey, at 90, for her part in founding the program and her contributions to the unit over the years, and of Kay Aston, founder of both the MATESL program and the Intensive English Institute. Besides Kay Aston, other past Directors and Acting Directors also joined in—Bruce Mainous, Yamuna Kachru, Eyamba Bokamba—and our current Director, Larry Bouton.

For two days alumni streamed back to campus, some returning for the first time since graduation. Our very first MATESL graduate, Katherine Eaton (1967) came from Texas, and many, many others from near and far. One hundred forty-two alumni, faculty, and current students signed the guest book and picked up a packet of goodies—a booklet of remembrances from faculty and students, a chronology of highlights in our history, and a schedule of events.

Those events included panels on ESL in Overseas Contexts, ESP: Out in the Real World, and Alumni Perspectives. For those wanting to get out and about, there were demonstrations in the LinguaCenter, displays of DEIL faculty and student publications at the new Illini Union Bookstore, and tours designed especially to reintroduce the campus to those returning after a long absence. And many open times were available for alumni to connect with each other.

The festivities were capped off Saturday evening by James Alatis, past Executive President of TESOL and dean emeritus of the School of Languages and Linguistics at Georgetown University, who shared his reflections on the history of our field. Then we said our farewells over a light buffet in the Krannert Art Museum.

We owe the success of this milestone in our history to many, many people, including all the DEIL faculty and office staff, and the facilitators from the DEIL Graduate Student Association, all of whom looked after the details of arranging for panelists and speakers, housing for guests, airport pick-ups, book displays, wall and table decorations, preparing packet inserts and name tags, scheduling the use of campus facilities, organizing or ordering food, and doing the clean-up when it was all finished. To all of them we are deeply grateful. We also appreciate the generosity of the IEI for funding the event.

The accompanying pictures will give you a flavor of this thoroughly enjoyable and memorable gathering. If you didn't make it, be sure to join us at our next 50th! ■



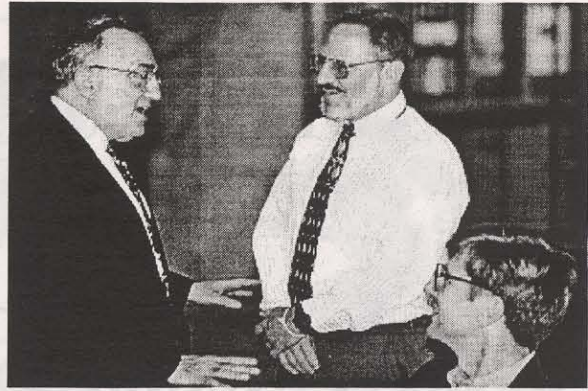
Wayne Dickerson has been on the DEIL faculty since 1971. He also serves as the Consulting Editor of DEILing You In.



Special guests Kay Aston and Mary Hussey, long-time friends and DEIL colleagues, at the welcome ceremony for DEIL's 50th anniversary celebration.



Mary Hussey accepts a gift from UI Provost David Liu.



Guest speaker James Alatis talks with Peter Lowenberg and Fred Davidson (1981).



Wayne and Lonna Dickerson (1971) visit with Cathy Wesolek (1989).



Pearl Goodman looks happy to be a part of the reunion weekend.



Mary Temperley, Mehri and Ron Cowan, and Eyamba Bokamba.



Part of the 50th display in the lobby of FLB, containing the graphic by Mark Cowan.



DEIL student members of the FLB atrium display team: Seung-Won Yoon, Kyung-Eun Yoon, Dan Kim, Jean Czaja, and Todd Enslin. Susan Taylor helped coordinate the festivities.



Cindy Giertz checks registration and welcomes Maria McCormick (1993) back to the Foreign Languages Building.



Beckie Brewer, IEI's first director, observes Jeff Moore demonstrate some of the new technology of DEIL's LinguaCenter Multimedia Lab. Bernardo Angulo (1997) is in the background.



Judith Gordon, DEIL's newest faculty member, Dianne Dow (1992), and Anne Lomperis (1976) get to know each other at the welcome reception.



Jerry Dungan (1975), Susan Taylor (1967), and Cindy Haney (1975) at the Authors' Book Display in the new Illini Union Bookstore on Wright Street.



Wency Rains (1994) visits with Barbara Buckley and Kay Aston.



Joanne Marino (1978), Ljubinka Jandrich (1983), Larry and Marjorie Bouton.



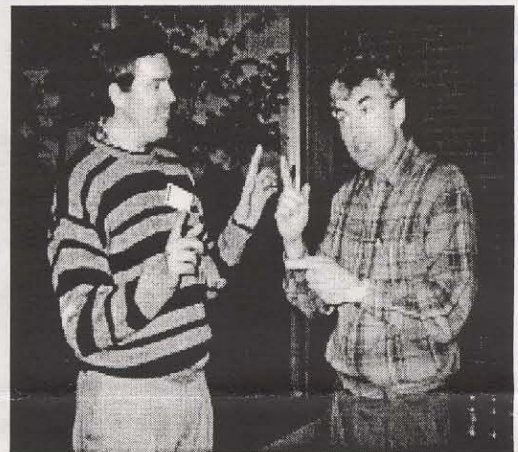
Dick Hertel (1989) signs the book at the Krannert Art Museum reception, with Larry Bouton and Bruce Mainous looking on.



Katherine Eaton (1967), DEIL's first graduate.



Barb Bair (1988), Wendy Hyman-Fite (1986), and Laura Hahn (1986) catch up on things at the Krannert Art Museum. Bonnie Mills-Zamora (1986) and Peggy Sharkey (1986) are in the background.



Dennis Keefe (1991) and Patrick Owens (1978) seem to be engaged in an animated conversation.



Susan Taylor, Ed Kalb, Yamuna Kachru, Joan Friedenberg (1975), and Erica McClure pose for a group picture at the Art Museum.



Jerry Dungan and Irene Juzkiew (1975) reminisce about their grad school days with Lubitza Katz (1970). Ukrainian visiting scholar Roksoliana Zorivchak and her husband Vassyl, are in the background.

Many thanks to the folks who contributed photos of the reunion:
 Numa Markee, Rachel Wallace, Gonzalo Perez, Susan Taylor, and Walter Buckley.

Alumni Update

She can be reached at the following email address: CAROLK@ecom.uca.edu

Sophia Shang (1984) gave birth to Jason Shang McLeod on Nov. 2 in Kagoshima, Japan. His nickname is Bunji because (according to her husband, Ken) "it looked like he was bungee jumping when he came out...The doctor caught him like a football!" Bunji's older brother, Makoto (otherwise known as Joshua) is now 5 years old. Sophia is on maternity leave until January and is looking forward to a Chicago visit at Christmastime! shang@kwc-u.ac.jp

Catherine Schlingmann (1985) is enjoying her job as International Student Coordinator for Bethany College in West Virginia, where she has been living for 7 years. Her duties include advising on immigration and cultural matters, teaching some ESL, doing new international student orientations, and advising the international student club. Ever the adventurous travelers, she and husband Dirk went to Sri Lanka this past summer.

c.schlingmann@mail.bethany.wvnet.edu

Paulette Koubek-Yao (1986) recently moved from New York to Hong Kong with her husband. She is adjusting both to a new culture and a new job as language instructor at the University of Hong Kong's English Centre. pkoubeky@hkucc.hku.hk

Beatriz Cofino Lawn (1988) just began a full-time tenure-track position as ESL Instructor at Gavilan Community College in Hollister, California. She says she's "excited at the opportunity and the challenges, though a bit 'antsy' about balancing work and family life."

blawn@gavilan.gilroy.com

Susie Sullivan-Tuncan (1988) and husband Erdal proudly announce the birth of their third child, daughter Sanya Melinda. She was born October 4 in Columbia, Missouri. iepsusan@showme.missouri.edu

Richard Hertel (1989) currently works for WILL Radio here at the University of Illinois. Watch for his book on French pronunciation for singers, complete with audiotapes, coming out next year through a Canadian publisher. r-hertel@uiuc.edu

Shirlaine (Babol) Castellino (1990) is teaching in Colorado at Spring International Language Center, a private intensive ESL school on the campus of Arapahoe Community College.

SPRINGSTAFF@arapahoe.edu

Susie Seefelt Lesieutre (1990) and husband Bernie recently bought a home outside of Boston. Susie teaches at Harvard Extension in the mornings and then at the American Language Academy with **Diane Eagle** (1989) in the afternoons.

SeefeltL@power.mit.edu

Steven Lund (1990) will have a new position at Arizona Western College beginning in the fall of 1998 when he will serve as the Director of the Center for Teaching Effectiveness. The CTE coordinates professional development opportunities, oversees the faculty appraisal process, and serves as a clearing house on teaching-related matters for 100 full-time and 140 part-time faculty members. Steven has served as the College's ESL Coordinator for South Yuma County since 1995. AW_LUND@awc.cc.az.us

Debbie Barks (1991) continues as a lecturer at the University of Michigan's English Language Institute, where she teaches courses in academic writing and speaking and also serves as student coordinator. This fall she taught the ELI's first-ever course for master's students in architecture. Last August she had the opportunity to travel to Caracas, Venezuela, as a USIS consultant. dbarks@umich.edu

Lillian Kutz (1991) is working with the Navigators in Shizuoka, Japan, 1.5 hours from Tokyo on the bullet train. Her activities include teaching English in a variety of settings and working with college students in a Christian club at Shizouka National University. Lillian-Kutz@classic.msn.com

Anne Berry (1992) is on leave of absence from the co-op in Madrid. She now resides in Washington D.C. and has a full-time position (split between the Depts. of EFL and Spanish) at Georgetown University. She's also found time to take some courses in discourse analysis.

berrya@gusun.acc.georgetown.edu

Jennifer Czajka (1993) is teaching ESL full-time at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee as well as working on her Master's in Social Work. She says, "ILOVE MY JOB!" Jennifer is teaching in a Focal Skills Program, where the students begin learning English through listening, then reading, next writing, and finally combine all the skills in immersion. You can find out more about her job by writing her at:

cjzajka@aol.com

Diana (Arya) Kimura (1993) just finished her second graduate degree, an MA in Literacy and Learning Disabilities from the University of Michigan. She recently married Kelly Kimura, a UI graduate in Mechanical Engineering, and is excited about the purchase of their first house.

dkimura@umich.edu

David Broersma (1994) and family send greetings from Moscow where they have been steadily working on the Russian language since they arrived in August. David writes that learning a new language certainly is a challenge, but "we're excited that our kids have a chance to learn to be bilingual." He's the Director of English Language Programs at Russian-American Christian University. Note his new email address: DBroersma@MAF.Org

Heather Music Gentry (1994) spent three years working with ELIC in Vietnam. Now she and her husband, Eric, have moved to Samarkand, Uzbekistan, a city with a long history steeped in Islam and Zoroastrianism. While there, they will be pioneering the Navigators' work with the Tajiks, a minority in the country but a majority in that city. After January 1999 she will be teaching at the Samarkand Institute of Foreign Languages. gentry_eric@compuserve.com

Tom Hilgartner (1994) is currently working at West Virginia State College teaching writing and reading to local developmental students and with the WVSC Community and Technical College "Accent English" program.

HILGARTI@Marshall.edu

Wency Rains (1994) switched jobs this August, leaving Bradley University to work for Caterpillar in Peoria, Illinois. wraains@heartland.bradley.edu

Akemi (Kaneko) Terao (1994) enjoys teaching at Tokyo Metropolitan High School and says that "everything I learned from DEIL has been very helpful." She married Hiroshi Terao on June 7 of this year. ha-terao@cb3.so-net.or.jp

Volker Hegelheimer (1995) and wife, Bellinda, are happy to announce the birth of their first child, Michael Alexander, on August 25, 1997. hegelhei@ux6.cso.uiuc.edu

Soyun Jeon (1995) currently teaches in the English Institute at Kyungbook National University in Taegu, Korea. syjon@kyungpook.ac.kr

Melissa Miller (1995) is in an intern-

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Updates *cont'd from page 3*

ship program at the University of New Mexico. She says that "the program has been excellent so far." Currently she is teaching 7th grade English in a Santa Fe middle school and will soon be certified to teach in New Mexico. msmiller@unm.edu

Haejin Patton (1995) got married in Champaign last October to Joe Patton, a good friend of **Brenda** and **Tim Noble** (1995, 1996), two DEIL alums. haejinjoe@bigfoot.com

Miao-Fen Florence Tseng (1995) is in the SLATE program in Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois. She and her husband keep themselves busy trying to finish their dissertations and taking care of their year-old daughter, Regan. tseng@students.uiuc.edu

Jay Wittmeyer (1996) is on a three-year assignment in Maijdi, Bangladesh as an agricultural training program advisor for the Mennonite Central Committee, a service, development, and relief agency.

Angel Bonilla (1997) returned home to his family and his job at the Centro Cultural Costarricense-Norteamericano in Costa

Rica in January. He has been keeping pretty busy working on a new English program for the Centro's Executive Program. He is also teaching two classes at the university. accnort@sol.racsa.co.cr

Mark MacLean (1997) moved to Ecuador to teach in the English Department at Universidad Especialidades Espiritu Santo. He says that "all is well here in Guayaquil, though I spend time dodging the rather large iguanas running around the campus." mmaclean@uees.edu.ec

Sue McDonagh (1997) was selected by Arthur Anderson, St. Charles, IL, to be their intern this fall semester. Sue says that "it certainly has been challenging work and I have been able to gain a good perspective on working in the corporate world." Her duties have ranged from doing translations to helping develop the Business English Immersion Training course. susan.j.mcdonagh@awo.com

Jacqueline Navarro (1997) has returned home to Costa Rica and is working at The American International School (also known as the Costa Rica Academy). Andrea_Navarro@quorum.nacion.co.cr

From the Editors

This issue of *DEILing You In* features a special insert with photos from DEIL's 50th reunion. Even if you could not make it back to Champaign-Urbana that weekend, we hope you recognize some "old" friends in the photos included here. Our thanks go out to all the people who helped make the reunion a huge success!

Conferences are another way to keep in touch with DEILers past and present. Look for the UI reunion at TESOL in Seattle, March 17-21.

Our feature article was written by Portia Williams, a former editor of *DEILing You In*. Remember we are always looking for article ideas. Won't you consider contributing an article for an upcoming issue?

If you haven't read about yourself in a while, please send us some news! You can e-mail me at a-kasten@uiuc.edu or Dr. Dickerson at dickrson@uiuc.edu or send us a note c/o the DEIL office and we'll include your update in the next issue of *DYI*.

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