

## TESL Seniors at BYU-HC Present Seminar Projects

The TESL program at Brigham Young University-Hawaii Campus is now in its fifteenth year of preparing teachers. One of the oldest such programs in the United States, it continues to be one of the few TESL programs in the country at the bachelor's degree level.

Three years ago, the requirements for a major in TESL at BYU-HC were modified to include a new "senior seminar" course. One of the requirements of this course is to prepare and present a senior project (a mini-thesis). The most recent of these were completed this past June.

"What Happened with the Cloze Test," by Norma Murray, investigated the relationship between twelve different variables in cloze passages (such as time allowed per blank, readability level of the original passage, etc.) and scores on the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP), a standardized, discrete-point examination. This investigation was part of an attempt to explain why previously strong coefficients of correlation between cloze scores and MTELP scores of students in BYU-HC's English Language Institute had declined in strength in recent administrations. Murray found that the unexpected drop in these coefficients of correlation was due to changes in the characteristics of the students taking the tests. There was a strong inverse relationship between the strength of correlation and both the level and spread of students' abilities. As their level of proficiency rose and the standard deviation of MTELP scores was reduced (the result of tightening standards in the ELI program) the correlation between MTELP and cloze scores decreased. Since these characteristics (level and range of abilities) of examinees are critical factors when determining the relationship between different tests, they should not be ignored in future research.

"A Comparison of Conceptual Tempo Between Polynesian and Asian ESL students" by Uinise Langi examined cultural

differences in the reflectivity/impulsivity dimension of cognitive style. An underlying assumption of the work was that conceptual tempo, although not as yet related by research evidence to language learning outcomes, will prove to be a variable which affects second language acquisition. Two measures were used in the study: 1) the Matching Familiar Figures test, a visual test used in past research, and 2) the Matching Familiar Sounds test, an aural test developed by Langi. The measures were administered individually to 62 subjects; 32 Asians and 30 Polynesians. An analysis of the data from each of the tests showed statistically significant differentiation between the two groups, with the tests themselves correlating at the .73 level.

Research project topics for previous senior seminar students at BYU-HC have been diverse, as the following listing of their titles shows:

*"Forces Affecting Lexical Borrowing: A Study of French-English Interaction,"* by Joëlle Janowski (1982).

*"Perception of Lexical Connotation: Professed Socio-Cultural Distance of Chinese Learners at BYU-HC,"* by Miranda Chan (1981).

*"Nonverbal Expressions in Intercultural Communication,"* by Kimiko Arizono (1981).

*"Analysis and Treatments of Noncount Nouns of Abstraction,"* by Yoshihiko Taniuchi (1981).

*"A Contrastive Analysis of Fijian and English Phonology in the Framework of a Hierarchy of Difficulty,"* by Lynda Aupouri (1981).

*"Male-Female Differences in Verb Inflection Errors in the Speech and Writing of Tongan Learners of English,"* by Lorinda Cluff (1980).

*"Sexism in Language,"* by Elisabeth Ekedahl (1980).