

From the writer's observation, some participants came to the conference solely for academic purposes, but some others came for the opportunity to explore employment possibilities or to avail themselves of the chance to hold informal professional discussions with their colleagues and superiors. The writer is glad that the conference provided a variety of opportunities to the participants. All in all, it was a successful first international conference organized by the Chulalongkorn University Language Institute.

"The Seventh Annual Thai/TESOL Convention"

13-15 December, 1986

A.U.A., Bangkok

Thiraboon Somboontakerng

Chulalongkorn University Language Institute

The Convention, which lasted for three consecutive days, was well patronised by a good number of ELT practitioners, academics, and interested parties. This might have been because the theme--English Language Teaching in the Thai Context--covered a wide range of topics and could stimulate discussions at all levels.

The Convention was also given considerable attention by the Government. His Excellency Marut Bunnag was present on the first day to launch the keynote address.

The Convention speakers represented most institutions concerned with ELT practices in the Kingdom. There were also certain famous figures from universities overseas. USIS sponsored the visits of John W. Oller, Jr. to give a plenary session on "Some Working Ideas in Language Teaching" and Lyle F. Bachman to give a talk on "The Use of Criterion-Referenced Tests in the English Class". Other invited speakers were Theodore Rodgers and Adrian Palmer from the United States, Peter Falvey from the U.K., and Thomas J. Kral from the Philippines.

The sessions were of two types: whole-group sessions where all participants were put together in a large hall, and parallel sessions where the participants could choose to attend the session that was of most interest to them. For this brief review, we would like to highlight the sessions conducted by His Excellency the Minister of Education, and three experts, namely Horey, Mountford, and Bachman.

His Excellency Marut Bunnag gave an overview on Thailand's current policies and goals of foreign language teaching, teachers and learners, and the needs of Thai society to learn the language.

Horey expressed his discontentment concerning the present practices carried on by colleges and universities in organising teacher training courses. He suggested four possible alternative areas on which emphasis could be placed: 1) the teacher as an academic, 2) the teacher as a technician, 3) the teacher as a craftman, and 4) the teacher as an artist.

Likewise, Mountford took up the issue of teacher training and emphasised the need to concentrate on the knowledge and skills which a language teacher requires and how to encourage and develop learning.

Bachman, on the other hand, turned the interest of the audience towards a criterion-referenced framework for testing in the English class. He described to the participants how to use this framework for test development, how to analyse it, and how to interpret it.

For those who are interested in detailed information of each session, the proceedings of the Convention are available at A.U.A.

The Convention ended with a panel discussion on “Where Do We Go from Now?”, for which Associate Professor Peansiri Vongvipanond, from Chulalongkorn University, was the moderator. Chaleose Pibulchon from Chandrakasem Teachers College, Chamnongjit Sattabongkot from the Department of General Education and Somtawil Dhanasobhon from Kasetsart University made up the panel.