Oral History Interview with Holda E. Dorsey

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California Department of Education
Adult Education Oral History Project

Oral History Interview

with

HOLDA E. DORSEY

California Department of Education
Director, Latino Adult Education Services Project, 1995-
Manager, US/Mexico Adult Literacy Project, 1991-93
Staff Development Manager, Outreach and Technical Assistance Network, 1989-93
Manager, CBE Staff Development Project, 1988-1989

Hacienda La Puente Unified School District
Manager, Adult Education ESL Project, 1993-95
Coordinator, Adult Basic Education Department, 1970-83
Instructor, Adult Education, 1968-70, 1983-88

California Council for Adult Education
State President, 1993-94
South Coast Section President, 1988-89

September 16 and 29, 1995

West Covina, California

By Linda L. West

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RESTRICTIONS ON THIS INTERVIEW

None.

LITERARY RIGHTS AND QUOTATIONS

It is recommended that this oral history be cited as follows:

Holda E. Dorsey, Oral History Interview, Conducted 1995 by Linda L. West in West Covina, California, for the California Adult Education Oral History Project

PREFACE

Adult education in California has a proud history of helping its citizens to meet the challenges of life in a huge, complex, multicultural state. Through the years, California adult educators have provided leadership to the nation in the development of innovative instructional practices and creative educational solutions.

The California Adult Education Oral History Project began in 1992 as a companion to a print history of adult education commissioned by the California Department of Education. As the century draws to a close, the growth and energy of California adult education in the sixties, the institutionalization of competency based education in response to the influx of refugees and immigrants in the seventies and eighties, and the innovative uses of technology of the nineties will be recorded.

The oral history project started with a small group leaders whose careers began in the 1950's and 1960's and who witnessed and influenced important events in the development of the nation's largest adult education program. Seven interviews were added in 1994 - 95, and additional interviews are being conducted in 1995 - 96.

Significant assistance to the new project was provided by the staffs of both the California State Archives and the Oral History Program, History Department, California State University, Fullerton. This project could not have begun without the vision of Raymond G. Eberhard, Administrator, Adult Education Policy and Planning Unit, California Department of Education, and the support of the late Lynda T. Smith, Consultant, Adult Education Policy and Planning Unit.

Linda L. West
January, 1996

INTERVIEW HISTORY

Interviewer

Linda L. West

Interview Time and Place

Two interviews were conducted in West Covina, California, on September 16 and September 29, 1995.

Editing

The interviewee reviewed and edited the transcript. When the tape was inaudible or when necessary for clarification, some information was added and is indicated by brackets [ ].

Tapes

The original cassette tapes were transferred to reel to reel format at California State University, Fullerton and deposited with the California State Archives.

CALIFORNIA ADULT EDUCATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEWEE: HOLDA E. DORSEY

INTERVIEWER: Linda West

[Session 1, September 16, 1995]

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

WEST: This is Linda West interviewing Holda Dorsey in West Covina, California, on September 16, 1995. I'm interviewing Holda to record her recollections of significant events and trends in California adult education during her career.

Holda, you have enjoyed a long and varied career in adult education, with extensive experience as a teacher, as a program and project manager, and as a staff developer. It's a little difficult to know where to begin this interview. Would you like to start with a summary of your background and how you came to the United States and got started in adult education in California?

DORSEY: All right. I'm one of four children, all from a middle-income family in Mexico City. One of the things that I feel had a tremendous impact on me was my father's [Jose del Rivero] attitude toward learning. He felt that it was important to research, to look things up, to study, to read, and read, and read, and read. And I'm

embarrassed to say that up to the age of eighteen I had never even been in a public library. Every time I needed a book, my father just bought it, and we had tons and tons of books around the house. And he was constantly quizzing us into more than that.

He also spent time in doing what I consider teaching techniques. My dad is an advertising man, but he used his advertising talent to teach in the classroom—the classroom in the house. For example, when I was learning geography of Mexico, my father painted the whole map of Mexico on one wall, so I had a wall-size map of Mexico. I learned rivers, he painted rivers; I studied mountains, he painted the mountains. It was fascinating. The ceiling had the constellations, so I learned all the constellations and their positions and their configurations. It was kind of an interesting situation [in which] to grow up: So, not only the visual things that were used to help learning, but the fact that he continued to inspire us.

From there I went on, not thinking of becoming a teacher. I thought I was going to be a lawyer because I had a gift for talking, and I thought law was definitely what I wanted to do. But one of my best friends was going to enroll in language and literature, so I didn't want to part from her, and I was overwhelmed by the number

of men that were registered in the university going into law, and coming from an all-girls' school I was a little afraid, kind of, so I just talked to my friend and registered in language and literature. And I figured, okay, I'll do a year of language and literature and then I'll transfer. Well, I never transferred, I continued language and literature. Both of us graduated together and went to school together every single day, shared the bus ride two hours every day going to school, two hours all the way back going home. It was horrible, absolutely horrible. We'd talk up a storm, we'd review classes, we did all kinds of things. She was going to be a teacher. I was going to be a theater director at that point. [Chuckling] I had spent a lot of time then with theater because my dad, as part of his job, did a lot of theater productions for television, so I spent a lot of my time doing television programs with him. And I even wrote a small play for children one time, which was aired on television, and it was not a great success but I felt very important with that. So it was kind of a variety of things that we did as young people, but school was prominent.

When I was in my second year of college, somebody told me that they were training teachers to teach Spanish as a second language, and they were interviewing people who might be

interested in that. So, since I didn't have anything better to do, I went to check it out. So I went to the interview with one of the gurus of education in Mexico—her name was Conchita Caso—and Conchita said, "Well, we'll review your background and find out if you qualify for this." To my surprise, they called me and they said I qualified for their training. To my surprise, there weren't that many people in the training. There were only twenty people in the training. It was intensive, it was three months, six hours a day, and I didn't have to pay for it, which was wonderful. The best class I ever had in my life. It reviewed techniques of teaching second language, it reviewed a variety of things, how to prepare lesson plans, how to write on the blackboard without getting your back to the students, all kinds of things. And we did a lot of practicing, preparing our lessons and presenting them to the group, who were terrible critics—I mean, very, very detailed. They criticized everything, you know? If you weren't clear on the board or if you didn't do the dialogue the way you were supposed to do, or you missed your hand signals, whatever. I think it was the best training I ever had.

What was interesting is, out of all that, I was the only one that got a job. [Chuckling] You know, the person who wasn't even interested got a job. And once I stepped in the classroom, I knew I

had found my niche. I *loved* the idea of teaching and to teach a second language. You see, it's a little bit different, you know. I was teaching at the university level, Spanish as a second language. Most of my students were college people, some already had degrees, and they were learning Spanish in order to improve in their profession, if they were teachers, to get a step increase, to get a special bonus, or one particular student, I think he was a linguist, he spoke seven languages already and was picking up Spanish as the next language. The first day I was overwhelmed. I just said, "Oh, my god, what am I doing? I'm a second-year student trying to teach this man," you know? And I went running to Conchita and I said, "I can't do this." And she said, "Yes, you can. You know something that he doesn't know. You know Spanish, he doesn't, so just go ahead and teach. You can do it." So it was an awful lot of fun.

What was interesting of that is that that's where I met my husband. My husband came from the University of Florida to Mexico City, to the National University of Mexico [Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico], to study Spanish. Spanish was required in whatever he was majoring in Florida, and he had had a very hard time at the classes at the University of Florida because they were very, very crowded. They had sixty to a hundred students

in a class, mostly, he says, in a laboratory situation managed from a console by the teacher. So, from there he ended up in my class. Somebody suggested he went to Mexico and study there because these were very small groups. We had, at the most, fifteen to twenty students, and they were all pre-tested and assigned to a class, where the classes were every day, two hours a day, what I taught, which was basically conversation, and then other people would teach reading, other people would teach writing, or grammar and whatever.

Richard was interesting because I was told ahead of time that he was a troublemaker: he knew more than everybody else and he tended to be disruptive. So that first day I showed up prepared not to allow this man to destroy my class. He wasn't going to make my class miserable. So, at the University of Mexico the teaching classrooms at that time, I'm talking about 1962, were very, very interesting, because the classrooms were small, you know, just accommodate a few people, and there was a platform that ran right in front of the blackboard. So the teacher stood on the platform all the time and the students were sitting below. So it doesn't matter how tall the students were, or how short I am. [Chuckling] You

know, I stood on this platform in my high heels and I felt like, Wow! you know, I was way up there.

But it was so funny because as I started my class. . . . And I only spoke Spanish, I never spoke English, because we also had students that spoke French and other languages, and in our training it was you speak the target language, not the other languages, so as not to confuse those who don't speak whatever language you can speak. And also because that way you are not at a disadvantage. My English was never going to be as good as the native English speakers, so give them all the Spanish that they are going to need—you know, the class was conducted especially in the language. So as I started teaching, I just went around, "Do you agree, Mr. Dorsey? Is that the way you saw it, Mr. Dorsey? What do you think, Mr. Dorsey?" [Chuckling] And Richard was like shocked. He just said, "What am I doing in this class?" Now he tells me, you know, that when he walked out he said, "I'm never going back to this teacher. I don't have to put up with this." And he says for about a week he would come to the door and say, "Do I go into this class? No, I don't."

Luckily for me, I had an observer in my class, and this person did interaction charts and things like that, and later would tell me,

"You know, you tend to lean to the right, you don't pay as much attention to the students on the left. When you write on the board you are not turning, you lose contact with the students," and so forth, you know, that kind of little tidbits that analyzes your teaching that are very, very helpful. And one of the things this person told me was that Richard wasn't asking questions just to be disrespectful, but that Richard really didn't know. He didn't know as much as he appeared to know, that the fact that he was outspoken wasn't that he knew more, it was that he really didn't know as much and he wanted to know, he wanted to learn. So I decided I might as well face him, you know, and talk to him face-to-face. So I asked him, I said, "I've noticed that you have all these problems," da-da-da-da, "you're always asking questions. And I don't want to put you off but, I also don't want the class to be so disrupted that I spend all the time explaining things to you alone. So I would suggest that if you can come early, I usually come about an hour before the class starts, so I could go over some of the points that you have problems with before you go into the class, and that way you learn and don't disrupt everybody else." So he thought it was a good idea, and so we started meeting and having a cup of coffee and a doughnut every

morning in the cafeteria and going over the points of the lessons that he had problems with.

So I looked at it as a teacher helping a student. Later I found out that he and two other students had made a bet who could get a date with the teacher. [Chuckling] And now I know how the other two approached me, and I just totally ignored it, because one wrote it on a composition that he wanted to know more about Mexican culture, and the best way to know it was to go out with a Mexican girl, so would I go out with him? Well, I just put it on the side, you know, I wasn't going to respond to that, and the other I don't even remember how or if he ever approached me.

And Richard approached me in a very interesting way. He found out that I did a lot of horseback riding in a very traditional Mexican type of club, and they called them *charros*, so you ride sidesaddle and you wear the whole garb with the big hat and everything else. So another student had seen me ride at a show, mentioned it to the class, and so Richard approached me and asked if that was a private place or outsiders could go. And I said, "Oh, outsiders could go." See, I'm going to teach this *gringo*, show him more of Mexican culture, so I invited him. So we agreed on a particular date, but I couldn't keep the date because my mother had

to have surgery. She had an appendix problem, appendicitis, so she had to be rushed to the hospital. I forgot all about the date and I just went and took care of my mother, you know, to the hospital and whatever. When I got home from the hospital, I found out that this man had been calling. And within half an hour of arriving, here this man shows up at my front door. How he found my address, how he found my telephone number, and how he managed to get to my house. . . . Because I lived in a very far away neighborhood and he didn't have a car, so I don't know how he did it riding the public bus, but he made it. So anyway he came to visit, and that was kind of fun.

It was interesting because my house was the gathering place of all the cousins. I come from a clannish family, lots of people, lots of people who always got together and did things together. So a lot of the cousins were there, and luckily for me because I also had a boyfriend who also was coming that afternoon, and so several of my cousins immediately took over, you know, to do the introductions of Richard and my boyfriend so I wouldn't have to say, "This is my boyfriend." [Chuckling] So it was very nice. It was handled very smoothly without anybody mentioning anything, you know? And the activities involved everybody. We played Ping-Pong, we played

cards, whatever, you know, and eventually everybody went home. And Richard liked the idea of having a family like that. He had grown up in a Yugoslav community in Chicago with an extended family, and he missed that. When they moved to Florida he hadn't had that, so he liked my extended Mexican family; and before I knew it, he became a regular that just showed up at the house. You know, I didn't know if he had any intentions toward me, toward one of my cousins. I really didn't know. But we always worked as a group. We went on picnics, we went dancing, we did all kinds of things together.

And eventually he listened to a conversation that I was having with a friend about my plans for the future. I had applied for a scholarship to La Sorbonne in France, and I was going to complete my doctorate there. So I went through the examinations, oral, written, etcetera, and I had been notified that I had been accepted for a two-year scholarship. So I'm telling my friend that I'm going to be going, you know, on such and such a date I'm going to be leaving, blah, blah, blah, and I'm going to stay there so I can finish my doctorate. And when my friend left, Richard came and said, "You're not counting me in your future. What's this?" [Chuckling] I said, "Well, why should I count you in the future.

You've never said anything for me to even take you into consideration. You're visiting here, going to school, and then you'll go home." So then he just said, "No, no, no, I have. . . . Haven't you noticed?" Well, I obviously hadn't noticed. [Chuckling] I hadn't paid attention, or he hadn't been obvious about it. And so from then on it became a little more formal, that he had more interest in me as a girlfriend and more as a fiancee.

He proposed in a very cute manner. He gave me this long speech one morning. He asked me if he could drive the car because he needed to talk to me. So I said, "Okay, you can drive." And he drove to the outskirts of the university. The National University of Mexico is in the southern part of the city, and it's a pretty nice area, so he drove to a very, very old archaeological site [Cuicuilco] that has a small pyramid, a very, very old pyramid, and in the meantime he's telling me all this sob story of his father is ill, he has to go home, da-da-da da-da-da, and I was just walking behind him saying, "I knew it, I knew it." You know, there wasn't going to be any future in getting involved with this guy, you know? [Chuckling] And when we got to the top of the pyramid, and this is like barely seven o'clock in the morning, you know, and the sun is just starting to rise. And here we are on top of this pyramid, and then he turned

around and he said, "Would you marry me?" It took me two seconds to say yes. [Chuckling] And it was kind of interesting. Then we sat there and started planning our life together. Goodby France, goodby doctorate, goodby everything, you know, just go with this unknown person to another country and another life.

It wasn't that easy. My parents weren't about to say yes that rapidly. They decided there were other concerns, and one had to do certain things before one took off like that. So it took a few months, you know, for things. Obviously you don't get married overnight, not in a traditional country, not in a traditional family, and so it took several runarounds, you know. Mexico has also certain regulations for a person to marry a foreigner, and you have to get certain permissions from the Department of State, from the Secretary of State, [Chuckling] and it was really interesting. So, after we did all this humongous amount of paperwork, eventually we did get married and we moved to Florida.

WEST: What year was that?

DORSEY: That was in '63, September 22nd of '63. It's going to be thirty-two years very soon. Amazing, right? Our idea at the time was to go to Florida because that's where Richard was still in school. He'd finished school, we would go back to Mexico and live in Mexico

happily ever after. Well, part of it happened. You know, we did go to Florida, he did finish school, we did go back to Mexico, and we stayed in Mexico for a short time. It wasn't easy. You know, just like immigrants into the United States have to go through all this paperwork to be able to get job permits, etcetera, Mexico has the same kind of regulations, and a little more complicated. You cannot get a job unless you have a job permit, and you cannot get a job permit unless you have a job.

WEST: [Chuckling] That is complicated.

DORSEY: Well, it's the same here, you know. You don't get the job permit until you have a job offer, and the employer has to verify that there is such a need for that kind of employee, that there aren't any other people here in the United States that can do the job. So it's the same. You always think that it's bizarre until you realize that countries have that for the protection of their people. Of course, there are ways to get out of it; like there are ways in the United States, there are ways in Mexico to get out of that routine. In Mexico, at that time, what you did is what my father suggested: You hire a lawyer, you let the lawyer take care of it. For a price, you know? Richard wouldn't hear of it. Why would we hire a lawyer? You know, the very straight, square American that follows

the rules? I can do it. The American "I can do it," the American work ethic. Why should I pay somebody else when I can do it myself? I'm not working, I definitely have the time to do all the paperwork. Well! And no, we are not going to ask friends. I should be able to do it on my own. You know?

Well, months went by and we went nowhere until finally Richard said, "This is enough. I'm going back. And you can follow me as I go back and get a job." Well, my father was petrified, you know? Here they go. So on a Friday my father called friends, and by Monday Richard had the work papers. [Chuckling] And so Richard started working a little, and then finally he just said, "No, this is not going to work." So he came to California.

He had been in California once before, had had a wonderful job and had a good time here and felt it was a good place to come. So he came and I followed him shortly thereafter. I arrived in Los Angeles on Thanksgiving Day of '64, and it was kind of interesting. We already had my daughter, Angela [Mariangela Dorsey], who was born in Mexico. I had just stayed about a month after Richard came here to sell whatever belongings we had and to get the appropriate papers for my daughter to travel as a U.S. citizen born abroad. So we came here Thanksgiving Day, and from then on we

played the game of staying here, going to Mexico for a couple of weeks, coming back, until one day I just said, "Richard, we're never going to go back. This is not going to happen. I don't fit over there anymore. I have become too Americanized in some things, and my lifestyle is more over here." It was kind of a sad decision, and on the other hand it was common sense. You know, I had made my life here and I had realized that it's just a fact. If that's what you want, we'll stay, and we don't have to think anymore or put money aside to go back, so we decided to stay.

WEST: And eventually you started to work. [Chuckling]

DORSEY: And eventually. . . . Okay, I started to work. That was very interesting. I decided when we first got married I was going to be the perfect housewife, you know? I had worked for a little while when we lived in Florida, and you're going to appreciate this, I worked in a library. I worked in the Acquisitions Department. My responsibility was to research the prices of books and their publishers. Teachers, professors request materials, but they don't always give you all the information, and so there are special books in which you research, where the correct title is and the names of the authors, who publishes it, what the price is, etcetera, etcetera. And I became very good at that, especially with the Hispanic

authors, because I could decode the Hispanic last names very, very well. With a background in language and literature, I knew most of the authors. So, if the professor only wrote part of a name, I knew who they meant, so I could very quickly find them. So they were impressed at that kind of work that I could do, and so before you knew it I took all the unfindables. They gave me a cardboard box full of unfindables in Spanish, and I took care of all of those. And then I was given French, Russian, and before I knew it I was even doing Chinese. Not that I read Chinese or Russian for that matter, but I can compare characters and I can do that very well. So I had fun. It was one of the nicest jobs, and I really loved it. To see how a library works in the background was an awful lot of fun, you know. It's just another world, but it was also very, very interesting.

After we had children, I had my daughter and my first son, Richard, I felt my job was to stay home and be a good housewife, to cook the best I could, and do all those nice things that housewives do. I became very, very good. I ran a very good house, by schedule. You know, today is the 16th. Oh, it's washing windows day. All right, and today you do this. And Richard says that I never cooked the same meal for the first three years. I also was bored. Bored to tears, you know, and that's why I had three-by-five cards as to what

jobs needed to be done around the house and things like that, and everything. . . . You know, it was insane. I alphabetized things and put everything in order, the baby food jars, you know, what we should buy today. Insane.

Well, three comments: Richard said I was getting boring, I was not the same person he married; my mother said that I was harming my children because I was doing everything for them rather than allowing them to develop themselves; and my father said that I must live in a country of idiots because I couldn't talk about anything but cooking and cleaning and ironing. [Chuckling] Well, those three comments were like "You'd better get out and get a job." So I said, "That's it. I have to go out and get a job." And of course Richard said, "Fine, go get a job. I didn't marry you to be a housewife."

So I went and I looked, and to my chagrin, I couldn't get a job in a school because I didn't have a teaching credential, and nobody could tell me how I could go about getting a teaching credential. At that time, the California [State] Department of Education had an office downtown, and so I went there to see how I could go about applying for a credential. So they went me to La Verne College. They didn't send me to one of the state colleges,

they sent me to La Verne College, right? It cost a lot of money. So I went to La Verne College with all my transcripts. At La Verne they told me I was qualified to teach any of their Spanish language and literature classes there, but if I wanted a teaching credential I had to start from scratch. And I just about cried. I said, "No way. I don't have the money to go to school all over. I mean, I have a master's degree, I did all but fifteen units for a doctorate, why should I start from scratch to get a teaching credential? To heck with it. Forget it. That's not going to be."

So then I went and. . . . I can't type. To this day I haven't learned to type, so I couldn't even be a bilingual secretary. So I got a factory job and I started working in an assembly line in an electronics place, but at least I was out, I was doing something. I had an awful lot of fun. It was so fascinating to learn what ohms and resisters and whatever do.

And the other thing that I found interesting in the workplace is that the attitude in the workplace is very different than everywhere I had worked. People in a factory work at the bell and stop at the bell, and they don't do anything before or after. People will sit in front of their station reading a book, and they wouldn't even put [on] their smock before the bell rang. When the bell rang,

they got up, put their book away, put on their smock, got their goggles and got ready to work. And I was chastised by my coworkers because I went to the rest room during the break time. They said, you know, the break time was *my* time. Why should I use *my* time going to the rest room instead of going to the rest room on the company time. And I was appalled, because that was a completely different work ethic than I had grown up with. So it took me a little while to adjust to that. Also, I asked for work. When I finished one thing I always told the supervisor, the line supervisor, "I'm done. Can I have the next batch?" And nobody did that, at least in that place, you know? They waited until the supervisor realized that they had finished what they were given and then he brought them more work. It was very interesting. Anyway, I had a good time.

In the meantime, I decided I was not going to last doing that the rest of my life, so I'd better do something and learn typing. So I found out there was an adult school, and I went and registered in the typing class. Disaster, you know. [Chuckling] I was one of Jane Yourdan's [instructor, La Puente Valley Adult School] students. Jane Yourdan is a wonderful teacher, except when it

comes to trying to teach me how to type. [Chuckling] I have no finger dexterity. It's a disaster. I tried. I tried, I tried, I tried.

In the meantime, I found out that they had Spanish classes there at the adult school, so I asked if I could visit them, and they said sure, no problem. So one evening I went to visit the Spanish class. It was held at La Puente High School. And I was shocked. It was the most horrible, horrible experience of watching this person teach unipersonal verbs, reflexive verbs, and all these classifications of verbs to people who probably wanted to be able to order a beer, you know, or something to eat at a restaurant when they traveled in a Spanish-speaking country. It was horrible. And I was just appalled that something like that could be going on. So at break time I got to talk to the teacher, and the teacher said, "Well, I need a little bit of extra money and I happen to speak Spanish, so I thought this would be something to do, and the pay is good," and blah, blah, blah. Well, that made me angry. My real temper came out. So I marched back into the adult school and I said, "I want to talk to the director."

[End Tape 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

DORSEY: So I was asked why was I looking for the director, and I said, "Well, I want to apply for a job." And the typical question, "Do you have a credential?" "No, I don't," I said, "but I have three years' experience of teaching at the University of Mexico in Mexico City Spanish as a second language, and that ought to count for something." So, lucky me, the director, Tom Johnson [Thomas J. Johnson, Principal of La Puente Valley Adult School, later Director of Adult Education and Assistant Superintendent of Hacienda La Puente Unified School District], walks in. And so the person that was taking care of me went to tell Tom what I had said, and Tom said, "Come on in." So I went to his office and. . . .

Tom is kind of an interesting person, you know, he is funny and he speaks under his breath, under his mustache—at that time he had a mustache—so sometimes you really didn't know, and my English wasn't super good, so I had to really pay attention. But to my shock, he greets me in French. Well, I spoke French at one time in my life, and at that time I did speak it, so I responded and we carried on in French for a while. And then he says, "Well," in English, "how come you are speaking French when you are applying to teach Spanish?" And I said, "Well, I also happen to speak French, but I have never taught French but I want to teach

Spanish." He said, "All right, let me look at your papers. Mmm, well, you've been here for three years in the United States. So how come you never came over here before?" And I said, "Well, do you want to know the truth?" And he says "Yes." I said, "Yesterday I visited one of your classes, and it stinks, and I have never seen such bad teaching in my life." I said, "I don't care if you pay me or you don't pay me, I want you just to give me the opportunity of teaching your teachers how to teach." He laughed. He thought it was the funniest thing that anybody had said. He said, "Come with me. I'm going to show you other things." So here I go with this person I had never met in my life, in his car, and he takes me all around, at night, you know, to all these classes, and I'm going in and out of classes. You know, some are very nice, some are . . . I don't know what's going on in there, so we go in. And in the meantime, he's talking to me about MDTA [federal Manpower Development and Training Act, 1962], blah-blah-blah-blah-blah-blah-blah-blah. I don't know what he's saying, you know? Remember, I have no idea how the educational system in the United States worked. My kids are still babies, they haven't even started school. So I'm saying, "I don't know what this man is talking about." So he's just talking about federal this and federal that, and the state this and applications, and

everything goes over my head. So it's ten o'clock at night, and we get back to the parking lot, and he said, "Well, what do you think?" I said, "Oh, it sounds nice." "Well, do you like the new program?" "Well, it sounds good, but I don't know where I fit." "Don't worry, we'll make you fit. We'll call you." "Okay!"

So I went home and I said, "Well, it's one of those 'We'll call you, don't bother us,'" you know? That was a Thursday night. They called me the next morning. While I was at the factory they called my house, and my husband happened to be there and he took the message. And when I got home he gave me the message, and I said, "Hmm, interesting." I was to show up on Monday. So I took a day off from my factory job and I went there on Monday, and they said, "Oh, we want you to teach . . ." blah-blah-blah-blah-blah,"and these are going to be your hours." And I said, "Well, I have to give notice." "Well, go tell them that you're quitting." [Laughter] "That job cannot be that important." I said, "Well, shouldn't I give them a week or something?" "No, this is it. We need you now." And I said, "Well, okay." So I went to the factory and I told them I was quitting. And they weren't very happy with it, and they said, "Oh, we pay taxes to support the schools." Well, that didn't mean anything to me. I apologized and I said, "You know, I thought you

would be happy that I was getting something in my area of expertise," you know? It didn't matter, so I left.

So I went to work at Hacienda La Puente Unified School District, which at that time was called La Puente High School District, and it was La Puente Valley Adult School. I thought I was . . . I don't know what, you know, because I hadn't signed any papers. I just went to this meeting with other people who worked there. And I thought everybody knew what they were doing, and nobody knew what they were doing.

I was called in the office so I could fill out the papers, and a conversation went like this between two men—in fact, I know the names of both, Pete Bulza [Dr. Peter Bulza, counselor at La Puente Valley Adult School] and Manny Jimenez [Manuel Jimenez, administrator at La Puente Valley Adult School]—"Well, what do you think? Two dollars an hour?" "Oh, I don't think we can afford to pay her that much. A dollar sixty-five. We can't pay any more than that." And Pete said, "Well, at least two dollars. You know, she has children that she's going to have to take to a child care center and pay for child care in order to come to work here, so at least two dollars." I said, "You know, I don't care. Whatever." You know? [Laughter]

WEST: Not very smart! [Laughter]

DORSEY: So I thought I was hired for two dollars an hour, right? So I went on to meet with the other teachers and my two dollars to the teachers. I didn't know I was a teacher. Then I found out some were aides, so I assumed I must be an aide. You know, two dollars an hour, I have to be an aide. And so they were talking about, "Go find your books, go find the books you're going to teach with," blah-blah-blah. Well, I had no idea what books, you know? Well, nobody else does either. So then we go to meet the students. I have a lesson plan, I have my lesson and my handouts with me, and I walk in. Remember I applied for teaching Spanish as second language. And I walk in, and there is a sea of people who speak Spanish. [Laughter] And I looked and I said, "Oh, okay." "That's your group." "Okay, that's my group." So I turned my lesson backwards, you know, all right? I said, [Spanish] "*¿Como se llama?*" It's "What's your name?" And so we went around . . . and it worked out, it was fine. At the end of the day I was probably more confused than I was at the beginning.

Then, in the afternoon we went to the dry cleaning shop. Well, that was another shock. What am I doing in dry cleaning? So the dry cleaning teacher speaks English, the students obviously speak

Spanish, so I thought, oh well, maybe I'm supposed to translate. So I translated. You know, I just did the translation of everything that the teacher was saying. So, when we went back everybody told me I did very well, that was very nice, and good that I could translate so well. Well, okay, you know? So I went home, and that's what I'm supposed to do, I translate, you know, and I help them say "Hello, how are you?" and things like that in [English] in the morning.

Well, about two days later, we're sitting at. . . . We used to have a round table in the teachers' lounge where everybody ate lunch, and somebody came by, I think it was Manny Jimenez, and he went around the table: "She's a teacher, she's an aide. She's a teacher, she's an aide." Then I found out I was a teacher and the other two people that were with me were my aides. Okay? I didn't know that. I thought I was the aide to these people. Well, they were my aides. And then I felt I'd better take charge. So if I'm the teacher, they know materials, they've been around, they know the system, they speak English better than I do, I speak Spanish better than they do. And I was surprised, you know: they welcomed the idea that somebody told them what to do. They had no idea. They had been aides before with other teachers, and they knew the material, but they didn't know what to do with the material. So

teaching a second language is the same, regardless of what happens to be the target language. The methodology is not that much different, so it wasn't that difficult once we found some books or something to focus the instruction relative to what they could do with the groups, and then I made a little schedule where we rotated so I'd have responsibility with all the students.

It took me a while to figure out the students were in the Manpower program, in the MDTA program. They were funded to get a certain amount of English and job training at the same time. This was very interesting. It was new, you know. And then it dawned on me that *English This Way,* which was the textbook that [was] assigned to us, was totally useless: "This is a book, this is not a book. This is a pen, this is not a pen." That's not what the students needed. What the students needed was: "This is a shirt, this is a blouse, this is . . ." whatever, you know, the things they were going to be dealing with in the dry cleaning shops, since most of the students I had were going to be dry cleaners.

And it was very interesting. I was able to get through the dry cleaning teacher some brochures, materials that were published by the American Dry Cleaning Council—I didn't even know there was such a thing—and then I learned how they had to be dealt with in

order to dry clean, what kind of products were needed to. . . . Some chemicals are used with some materials but not with others. When you do not know what the material is, because not always it's listed properly, or some people have taken off the tags or whatever, you do a burn test on the material. You take a couple of strands from the hem or from the back of the material and you burn them, and the kind of bead or ash that it forms tells you what kind of material it is. That was fascinating. I learned all kinds of things. And their smell. They have different smells. Oh, we spent a lot of time burning strands. Well, I did a lot of sewing at home. You know, I used to make all my clothes and my kids' clothes, so I brought pieces of material and we did all kinds of burn tests. You know, "Watch the bead on that, and watch these and look." And oh, the smell! Anything that's acrylic, the smell is horrendous. So it was very interesting and we learned a lot. At least I learned a lot about dry cleaning.

And I learned that there are certain responsibilities in the dry cleaning shop, as to the treatment of your materials. And mistakes do happen. And the American Dry Cleaning Council, interestingly enough, sent brochures out to the dry cleaning shops as to: "This kind of material has this kind of problem. If this ever happens to

you, it's the fault of the manufacturer of the material," blah-blah-blah, "and this could bleed or this could do that, or the dye in this doesn't take." And I found that fascinating. It was a whole new world of information. And it was interesting also to pass it on to the students. So I was basically like a chapter ahead of the students just in getting to know what was going on.

From dry cleaning, another teacher was hired to take over dry cleaning and I was moved to do machine shop; so I learned a lot of machine shop also, and I learned a lot of math. I had to review a tremendous amount of math, which I had forgotten existed. Then we also had a program for janitorial cleaning. I learned to clean windows. That's the one thing I learned to do, how to clean windows properly, how to use a squeegee, this way first, and then this way, and then you clean it up like that. And it was very interesting. I spent a lot of time in the bathrooms, you know, watching the students clean toilets properly. That's part of English also.

Then we got a completely different group of students, also with the MDTA program. These students spoke English. And it was like a shock, you know? After spending almost a year with a group of students that didn't speak a word of English, and trying to

give them enough English so they could survive on the job, all of a sudden I get this new batch of dry cleaning students that are fluent in English, they're native English speakers. Can't read or write.

I had never in my life thought or dreamed that there were people who could not read and write in this country. That was an eye-opener, you know. In a third-world country, yes, there are an awful lot of people who cannot read or write. There aren't enough resources to provide instruction to everybody who could benefit from it. And I know Mexico has had a tremendous problem with literacy because, especially in the outskirts, sometimes there are not enough schools or they have schools but there are no teachers. In the big cities, the problem is overcrowding. Classes are sixty, seventy students—and I'm talking about elementary school—and they have three shifts, you know. Horrendous! And so it's understandable from a third-world country there are people who are illiterate, but in a rich country like the United States, how could we have people who are illiterate? It was just beyond my comprehension.

But it was interesting, too, to start working with them in teaching them. That was a new skill that I had not practiced at all, teaching them to read, and it was again trying to teach to read

targeted to the job. That was interesting also. You know, how do you go about getting just the important content without neglecting the ability, the skill of reading? And getting the students to appreciate the skill of reading and practice it in their own life, you know, by learning to read and enjoying it, I found that challenging more than anything else.

I had one student that to me was fascinating. The woman was probably in her forties, several children, and she could not read at all. And one day she showed up with her seventeen-year-old daughter, who was a senior in high school, and she wanted her daughter to enroll in the class and to be accepted in the class. Well, I didn't know that she could bring her daughter, so I sent her to the counselor and the counselor said, "Yes, let her in." So Jenny, was the daughter, came to class, and that was a high school student, a senior, who couldn't read. Mother didn't know because Mother didn't read. Mother starts learning to read, Mother starts becoming proficient, starts asking daughter for help, and finds out daughter can't read. How did daughter manage to get all the way up to be a senior without being able to read? So, in talking to Jenny—that was another interesting thing—she memorized everything. *Every single thing*. She heard the other students read, she memorized,

memorized, memorized. Can you imagine what a beautiful mind? It's incredible that these people could be so bright and have such wonderful skills, and somewhere we were unable as teachers to help them to develop the skill of reading. Anyway, Jenny did beautifully. I mean, she just went through everything very quickly. All she needed was a little bit of attention and pointing her in the right direction. So she and her mother both finished very nicely. Jenny finished her high school and Mother finished her elementary school, and it was very rewarding to see that. That was a wonderful story and I had a wonderful time.

I'm going to backtrack a little bit because to me this was important, okay?

WEST: Mm-hmm.

DORSEY: While I was teaching the first dry cleaning group, I also got pregnant—or didn't *get* pregnant, I became pregnant. Whatever. And I did not know what the rules and regulations were, and I was dreading that I would get fired or laid off because I was pregnant, you know?

WEST: It would have happened in previous years. [Chuckling]

DORSEY: So I talked to my husband and my husband said, "You have to approach it directly. Just go and tell them you need to take some

time off at a certain time and why. And if you make the statement as a matter of fact, I don't think they'll have any objection to it." I said, "Okay." So I went and said, "I'm going to need to take some time off next January," blah-blah-blah, "I believe probably a week, and I have some personal things to take care of." "Just what personal things?" I said, "Well, I'm going to have a baby then." "Oh, you're planning on having a baby next January?" And I said, "No, I'm pregnant. I know I'm going to have a baby in January." [Chuckling] "Oh, okay, well, we'll deal with it when the time comes."

Well, it was really interesting because obviously I showed being pregnant. That was a turning point with a lot of our hard-core gang-type Hispanic students. The fact that I was pregnant made me like a queen. Anything I said was okay. Anything I wanted them to do was done. They studied *really* hard. They worked *really* hard. And we had special sessions after school where they would bring a chair outside in the parking lot and they all sat . . . I sat on the chair and they all sat on the floor, and we discussed life. To me, that was more teaching than what was happening in the classroom. There was a lot of personal problems that they had and problems with [not enough] food, problems with this, problems with that. And in my mind I was going on that these

people needed more than skills. You know, don't just teach them the skills to be able to succeed in the job; they need skills to cope with life. And some of these were English-speakers. They were born and raised in this country and had fallen through the cracks, and they had never really merged into society because they lacked some of the basic life skills. So it was educational for me as well as it was educational for them.

So the time came for me to have the child, and the doctor decided we weren't going to wait until January. This was a very big baby so we were going to have this baby in November.

WEST: Oh! [Chuckling]

DORSEY: Yes, two months. I was going to have a seven-month baby. The baby was big, and if they allowed it to get any bigger, I would . . . I would be torn apart. So we scheduled it. So I went and told Mr. [Michael] Abramson [counselor, La Puente Valley Adult School], "I'm going to be absent tomorrow. I'm going to have the baby tomorrow." [Chuckling] And he looked at me like, "What?" And I said, "Here are my lesson plans for the substitute, and I'll see you Monday." [Laughter] I don't think he could say anything. He was in shock, you know? So I left and packed my stuff, and sure enough, went in the hospital the next day, had the baby, and came

back to work on Monday. Well, I came back to work on Monday and everybody went like, "You can't come in." I said, "Why?" "Aren't you going to take time off?" And I said, "Why should I? I already had the baby. I'm ready to go back to work." [Chuckling] And so they said, "Well, I need a paper from the doctor." I said, "Well, yeah, here it is. I have a paper from the doctor." So they had to let me work. The doctor said it was okay. But everybody was like, "What's this?" you know? [Chuckling] Even the students were amazed, and I said, "Well, people have had children forever, and pending that there are no complications. . . . You remember, Indians squatted, had a child, and went on in the trek. So, pending that there are no complications, there is no reason why not. Actually, I relax more in the classroom. I get to sit, I get to talk to all of you. If I stay home, I have three kids! Two little ones and a baby." I said, "That's not rest. I'm better off over here." So anyway, it was fun. We had a good time.

So the MDTA programs continued. The first couple of years that I worked at Hacienda La Puente I got moved from program to program fairly regularly. I went from the dry cleaning to the machine shop to the janitors, to the dry cleaning again but with a different kind of student, to janitors again with English-speaking

alcoholics. [Chuckling] And I have a story about the alcoholics, too. So I was moved all the time, and I was getting a little worried. I went and talked to Mike Abramson and said, "What? What am I doing wrong? I just move from place to place. I finally get something going and I get moved." So he said, "Well, you trained them, you organized it, you get it on course, anybody can take over, then you get moved to start a new one and get it organized." [Laughter] I felt better, you know. For a while I felt that I was being moved because I wasn't doing the job correctly; so I felt that, okay, that was a compliment, now I can work a little harder.

Let me talk a little bit about those students, the janitors that spoke English. I don't know how to classify them, but they are the very, very poor white people who also fell through the cracks and had no background, no educational background, and they were being trained to be janitors. It was the most interesting group of students we ever had. Let me paint the picture. We taught in a warehouse-looking place that was rented.

[tape turned off]

The classroom was situated in this warehouse kind of building that had been rented for that purpose, but we weren't allowed to have partitions built, so everything was hanging from chains from the

rafters. So you had classes that *swayed.* [Chuckling] You tried to put something on a wall and the whole class moved back and forth, you know? It was kind of interesting. The other thing that was interesting is that at night they parked some of the district vehicles in there. So, when Lane McKeever [instructor, La Puente Valley Adult School] and I came to work in the morning, [Chuckling] we had to open the back door, drive out the vehicles, put sawdust on the floor where the oil had been spilled, unfold our tables and chairs, move the partitions back where they belonged, these hanging partitions, you know, pushed them, and then were ready to begin class. Okay? It was interesting.

Both of us are teaching what is called basic ed [adult basic education] now, right, to these janitorial groups. And we had nice men that came to class in the morning, some less clean than others, and by ten o'clock we had a lot of very drunk students. Drunk, real drunk. Kicking trash cans around, pushing this, whatever. We couldn't figure it out, so we checked everything, we looked everywhere. Eventually we found it: in the tank of the toilet in the bathroom. That's where they kept the bottles of gin. [Laughter] Okay, so our drunk students. . . .

So we taught them this, taught them that, and I started harping on the students about cleanliness: "How could you be a janitor if you don't wear clean clothes? How could you be a janitor if you . . ." da-da-da-da. Especially a guy that there was just black dirt on his arms and you sat next to him to help him with a math problem and you almost died. So, anyway, eventually he cleaned up. You know, he started shaving, he started showering, he started wearing clean clothes. And his wife came to see me and she said, "Oh, Mrs. Dorsey, I am so happy all you've done for Kyle. I always kept clean clothes for him but he wouldn't wear them. Now he does. I am so happy. Now, if you can just get him to wear his dentures I'll be happy." [Laughter] Objectives, right? Talk about objectives for our students!

WEST: Individual education plans.

DORSEY: Individual education plans, right: Wear dentures. [Laughter] And make the wife happy, wear your dentures. So no, Kyle graduated without wearing his dentures. That he was not going to do, but he looked clean, he took showers, he wore clean clothes. That was a success.

I got a new group of people, and here I find my 100 percent American nonreader, you know? I'm serious, a nonreader. Nothing.

And this is the biggest boo-boo of my life. I have this student that I don't know who it is, but I know there is one student in the group that can't read. And basically in papers that I pick up, there are papers that have the alphabet soup that doesn't make any sense. So I started walking around, you know, any time the students are doing something, walking around and checking and checking and checking until I find out who it is. The book is upside-down, he's going along, you know, with a finger and that, the book is upside-down. So I finally focused, you know? So I do the smart thing, I write a memo: "Dear Student, I have noticed that you have some reading problems. . . ." [Laughter] "Maybe we can get together to discuss it." [Laughter] After I wrote the memo, luckily I never gave it to him, I sat down and I said, "Oh!" [Laughter] And yes, so I did talk to him, and thank God we had Mike Abramson who could *really* talk to everybody, and Mike worked with him and we made a very good program for him so he could proceed with his education in spite of my memo. [Chuckling] And it's just like all of a sudden you realize what you use as a means of communicating with the world does not work with the students, and you have to shift gears all the time.

Well, I said Lane and I were sharing this facility. After that we got moved to another facility, and I'll be darned, we're in the

same room, both of us. So we put our file cabinets in the middle to make a division. Well, it doesn't work. She's loud and I'm louder, that doesn't work. Lane is teaching in basic ed 0 through 4, and I'm teaching 5 through 8 grade levels. Somehow this doesn't work. The higher-up of my end and the lower of her end, we were losing them because this just cannot be. So one day I said to Lane, after we got moved together and a couple of days later we noticed it wasn't going to work, I said, "Lane, can we sit down and talk about this?" And so the two of us decided that we would join forces and we would team teach. Because there is no way we could continue in this room trying to outdo each other. And so we did. The beginning of team teaching started. And we set up that she worked with a group, with a small group of students in a particular subject at a particular level, while I dealt with the other students on a semi-individualized kind of workbook type of work. And that went on for a little while, which was working out very nicely, and at least we were able to have more students, because we started getting students outside of the MDTA program, we started getting community students and other students joining the basic education class. But now the two of us working together were able to handle a broader spectrum of students because we weren't focused on just this little group.

We got moved once again. That was part of the tradition at Hacienda La Puente, you get moved not only from class to class but from location to location. We were told we were going to be moved to a particular building, so whenever our furniture wasn't in the place where we were, we would have to go find the new location. So we came to work and our furniture wasn't there; so we went to the new location and it wasn't there either. Oh, shock. We had no idea where it was. An hour later we still had not found our place, and nobody knew where we were. There was a new building, and we were in the new building, which is now Cosmetology. And it was a beautiful facility because the area that we got for our classroom had one long room and four small cubicle-kind of rooms opening into that, and it had its own bathrooms, which was really, really nice. So, after we sorted out, with the help of the students, all the materials and stuff, and put things up on the board. . . .

[End Tape 1, Side B]

[Begin Tape 2, Side A]

DORSEY: Okay, materials. We got all the discards from everybody, from the elementary schools. There weren't that many books designed for adult education; in fact, there weren't any books designed for adult education, either in ESL [English as a second language] or in basic

ed, at the time. There were a few readers, primers, but not [like] Steck and Vaughn [have now] produced. In fact, they still sell them nowadays, but nothing dramatic. Lane and I requested an encyclopedia so at least we could have some sort of resources for our students, and our administrator bought what they thought was the most appropriate, the [*Encyclopedia*] *Britannica*, totally useless. We never used it, okay? So then Lane and I brought a *World Book Encyclopedia* from home so the students could use that. I bought the newspaper every day, and out of the newspaper I made dittos. That's the reason I came so early before class started, because I would sit down and get certain stories from the newspaper and make dittos, made grammar exercises from the newspaper stories and things like that. Those were our teaching materials.

So the first time that an assignment letter came out that actually asked us what kind of materials would you like for this coming semester, Lane and I made a list. We wanted a duplicating machine, we wanted this . . . and paper and folders and. . . . We thought we were in heaven. We had all these things. An opaque projector! Can you imagine an opaque projector?

So, with that I also found the language master machines, and the language master machines became like the best aide any of us

could ever have. The language master machines were what we [used to create] special vocabulary lessons for the students in whatever happened to be what they were going to study, and because a lot of our students were going to go into vocational training at that time. . . . We didn't have a lot of vocational training programs, but the few that we had the students were going to study. And we started creating mathematics, arithmetic kind of lessons, multiplication tables and things like that in the language master. So, at one point there I said to Lane, "Okay, we're doing all these materials, and this is fine." And Lane reminded me the other day that I always would say, "Lane, can you come at 7:00 tomorrow morning because I have a new idea?" And she would say, "Okay." [Chuckling] She was always willing to follow whatever I said. So she came at 7:00, and decided we will do individual folders for each student, where we will have the materials that the students were working on. By then we knew how to test, okay? [Chuckling] with the CAT, California Achievement Test, and so we tested the students. We knew where they were. We already had an idea of what kind of reading, spelling, or whatever was necessary, and we could move on from there. So that we could just put the materials the student needed into their folder and have the folders on the

table, so as the students came they picked up their folder and started working on their own.

And then we scheduled group teaching in our little room. One little room was for reading group, another was for the math group, another was for spelling, and we did some scheduled groups, group reading or whatever, and we also did spontaneous grouping. You know, as you walk around watching what the students are doing, you find that three students are having problems with multiplying times 7 or whatever it happens to be, or subtracting from 0. So you pull those students, move the portable blackboard, explain it, those students knew it, then you walk away and let them work on their own. The way we set it up was individualized, but also we did a lot of group interaction, and we finished the day every day with one group activity, the newspaper. Even if it meant that one student could only read the headline, or two words, or whatever, and somebody else read a lot, the discussion included everybody. And I think that helped form a group and give the students the idea they were getting something that was for themselves and very individualized, but they were part of the general group.

We had the one teacher that did the grouping while the other walked the floor. You know, it required two people to work

together. And we traded off as to who did the grouping. I always preferred doing reading with the higher level because I got terribly bored with the lower level. Lane *loved* working with the nonreaders. To her that was just the right pace, and she enjoyed watching them flourish. So she and I matched each other perfectly, and we worked together very, very well.

To my surprise, that basic ed model has been kept to this day. And so we started doing that somewhere in the middle of '69. By November of '69, Tom Johnson said that I had to do this presentation at CCAE [California Council for Adult Education] as to how we were teaching basic ed. And I said, "Okay." So I went to make this presentation. And it was very interesting, the audience didn't warm up to it at all. They didn't think it was very appropriate to give students assignments on their own, that they would come and get their materials and that you just walked around and helped them instead of being the center and guiding all instruction, to allow the students to work on their own, and it was very interesting. You know, for that they could stay home and study. You know? [Chuckling] And I couldn't convince them that we [teachers] were there, but a lot of it was we would let them do a lot of things by themselves, and there was no sense of having students sit in a

classroom while you were teaching something that they already knew, or trying to teach something so high for other students that these other students just felt completely left out, and that what I had observed is that people taught to the middle and you lost both ends. I was very frustrated, and when I looked at the evaluations I almost cried. In fact, I was really frustrated. And Mike Abramson said, "That's okay. That's okay. They've got their opinion. Let them express their opinion. But what you're doing is working, and it works well, so you can feel good about it." And time has proven that it was the right way to go about it, because things happened like that.

WEST: And today most of the ABE programs in California use that approach.

DORSEY: Right. Almost all the ABE programs use that approach, and the high school diploma program. Even though I don't claim to be involved with the high school diploma program. But it was about '69 when they started the high school diploma program, about the same time, in our district, in the same individualized format. Up to that point, we had a high school diploma in the evening with a history class, an English class, and etcetera, and the students had to register for each specific class taught by an instructor. And so if they came

four nights a week, maybe they had history and math and whatever, you know? So they opened the lab at the end of '69.

I remember talking about Elsie Whitey, who was a[n adult education] teacher in the Los Angeles [USD] school system, who was doing individualized instruction and had the high school diploma in a lab situation. So the person that came to work at our district, Mary Kernodle [instructor, La Puente Valley Adult School], went to visit Elsie and brought some of the ideas from the system to get it started in our own district. And to this day, it's the same system that is being used not only in our place but everywhere else. And I think the individualized instructional lab is about the only way, with dwindling resources, that anybody could offer any kind of adult basic education or high school diploma program. You know, it's just too difficult not to do that.

From my perspective, when you want to focus the teaching into areas that have to do with the work that the student is going to do, which the majority of our students are focusing on that, a lot of the adults who come to school, it's because they want to either get a job or get a better job, or improve within the job where they are. It's our responsibility to make sure that we move the instruction into content that has to do with their life, their work; and the only way

you can do it is individualizing it. So I think in English as a second language it's being done more now than it was in the past, and that makes me go back to vocational English.

Vocational English as a second language is a term that now is very common. Everybody knows VESL. In '68 nobody had heard of VESL. And when I faced the dry cleaning and realized that what I needed to do is teach dry cleaning terminology, or machine shop terminology, or carpet making terminology, it was like, "Oh, my gosh, this is a new area." Since the program was being funded by the MDTA, then somebody coined the word MESL, Manpower English as a second language. So Manpower English as a second language made sense because it gave you the legitimacy of teaching English within the content of the Manpower program.

Later, I don't remember exactly if it was in 1970 or when, somewhere in there, one of the local factories, Walter Carpet Mills, called and asked if we could have classes in their facility. They were planning to double the size of the factory, and they needed to move some of their line employees into middle-management positions, and the drawback is they didn't speak English. So they wanted to be able to teach them some English so they could move into those positions. So I and a couple of other teachers went there, and it

was very interesting because as we took the tour I realized it was another world of language again, you know? It wasn't just to be able to speak English, it was to speak English within the context of the work they were doing: tufting, crilling, and all these other new words that had no meaning anywhere else except in the carpet factory work. It's almost amazing. . . . That was '69 and '70. Okay, this is '95. This year we started classes in the same location all over again. Okay? It's a new company. It's called Bentley [Mills] now. The Walter Carpet Mills, the factory has had several names, always a carpet factory, and we have been involved in there all these years at one time or another. So now we're with Bentley Mills teaching the same thing all over again.

WEST: To different people.

DORSEY: To different students, completely different students. Different management, different group. Well, let me go back to Walter Carpet Mills. Walter Carpet Mills gave part released time to their workers and part. . . . Basically they gave them an hour and they had to put in an extra hour. So we ran three shifts of classes: 7:00 to 9:00, for the people that got off work at 7:00; then 1:00 to 3:00 to the people who went to work at three o'clock; and 3:00 to 5:00 for the people who got off work at three o'clock. And I taught all of

the shifts. It was very interesting. We taught wherever there was space, sitting on rolls of carpet in the middle of the warehouse, sometimes in the cafeteria, sometimes in the conference room—very elegant, it had carpet on the floor, on the walls, and in the ceiling—you know, absolutely great. What I thought was very interesting was management was definitely interested in people learning the language of the job, nothing else. And the students were not. The students wanted to learn the language of the world outside, to go to the doctor, to go to the store. But we had been asked to do the language of the job, so we did that and referred them to the local adult schools for the other kind of language. Management also within a month decided that they might as well learn Spanish, so I taught Spanish as a second language to them from 5:00, when they got off work, to 7:00. So I spent my life at Walter Carpet Mills, really, you know, from 7:00 in the morning to 7:00 at night, with a few hours in between going someplace else.

And it was very interesting because I decided obviously they want to learn the language of the job, so I taught Spanish as a second language for carpeting manufacturing. They didn't like that at all, and they told me: They want to be able to go to a restaurant and order, they want to be able to order a beer, they want. . . . And

I said, "Well, my instructions were that this was for communication on the job, and that's what we're doing with employees and with management." And pretty soon the position of the company was changed: it was English for communication, regardless, and it was Spanish for communication, regardless. So it was kind of a small victory for the workers, and we were able to expand the curriculum to include other things that the students were interested in learning.

I think it was very successful, but the success came from the company. The company had a newsletter and they highlighted the students that had done the best, students that had not missed a day of class, students who got promoted because they learned a lot of English. They had a huge banquet for the spouses and their families and everybody for completing a course, and they did a lot of promoting within the students or the workers.

The workers also did interesting things. I don't know how much you know about the production of carpeting, but after the tufting and the dyeing and everything happens, the last step is when they paste the jute in the back of the carpet. And in order to paste that, the carpet goes through an oven that is probably, what could I say, a hundred yards long? It goes on rollers through this oven. Well, the students, very innovative on their part, take a goat, wrap it

in banana leaves, stuff it in a sack, hang it at one end of the oven, and it travels all through the oven, and when it comes out it's perfectly baked. [Chuckling] And then they had a wonderful lunch of goat meat—you know, a *barbacoa* [barbecue]—that's just great. Well, I was amazed that they did that, you know? But what was more amazing is the owners of the factory, the management loved it. They would just tease them, "When are we having goat again?" Because they would come down to have lunch with the workers. [Laughter] Everybody loved that. It was very, very interesting.

Among the things that were interesting there in the factory, too, is students complained or workers complained that they worked overtime and they were overworked, and da-da-da-da-da. They had never understood that they were paid overtime, time and a half. So I played the role of middle person between management and workers, explaining those details. Eventually we got the manual from the company and taught it to the students page by page, you know, what their salar[ies were], and when they got their raises, and what the reviews meant, and what the scale was in the different kinds of jobs because of the difficulty and whatever, or the skills required, what the benefits were, how overtime was calculated, how they were paid. And I think it helped keep good relations between

management and personnel, just knowing about the job. So that again confirmed my belief that you've got to teach what's necessary. Whether you are doing it in the classroom or at the factory, you have to teach what the people need to learn in order to have a more satisfying life and getting along together.

So vocational instruction, whether it's called Manpower ESL, or eventually vocational ESL, became kind of a focus in our school. We also had with the Manpower programs, we had groups sent to us from the Employment Development Department. At that time it was called HRD, Human Resources Development—and I will never forget HRD, because those are my initials. So HRD was the agency that had the money for Manpower training. They in turn interviewed, selected the participants, and referred them to the school. And they usually already came prepared with a plan.

The plan required most of the time that people completed eighth-grade education before they could enter vocational training. The problem with that is that they had two years for them to do whatever it was that they were going to do. Well, in many cases they could spend a year and a half doing basic skills, and what are they going to do in six months of vocational training? Nothing. It didn't make sense. So we talked it over with Tom, and Tom

Johnson understood perfectly that there is no incentive for people who have already failed in several educational systems to continue going to basic skills. If you pair it off with the job it makes sense, you know, and so we fought. . . . I shouldn't say *we* because I only went to a couple of meetings, but Tom went [to] all [of them and] fought hard—very, very hard—in getting the regulations changed. And we had, Lane and I, lots of visitors from the employment office as to, "Well, and how is so and so going to be able to do . . . and how can he do this, and how can he do that?" or whatever. And amazingly enough, they did change the regulations so people could go a couple of hours to basic skills and the rest of the time in the vocational training. And that was a major change also in the regulations because it made sense and it gave the students a lot of incentive of doing better in their academic skills, because they knew [the academics] had a relationship to what they were learning in their vocation. So, for us it meant you'd better get busy creating new materials that have to do with the vocation. At this point we're doing it strictly with basic ed. In this area, you know, we haven't even tapped ESL, but in basic ed. . . . And by that time, another teacher had come on board, JoDeane Zalay [instructor, La Puente Valley Adult School], and she worked hand-in-hand with several of

the instructors in designing vocabulary and other kinds of materials that would work for auto mechanics and for welding and things like that. And especially with language masters. We had language masters galore with all these materials, which was very useful to our students, and a lot of math exercises based on what the students needed on the job. So that worked out very well.

And as we're going along with this Manpower, all of a sudden there is a change of names. Manpower becomes Work Incentive, WIN, the WIN program, W-I-N. There is also a change in my job. I'm out of the classroom now and I'm coordinator of ABE, adult basic education, and so I also have the responsibility of ESL and the responsibility of basic ed. When I first started, even though I taught ESL, I didn't teach ESL within the mainstream of the ESL program, I taught it within the vocational context for the Manpower program. So this is the first time that I'm really going to face the regular ESL program. So, as part of my new job, it's going around and visiting the classes, and visiting the classes, and visiting the classes, and there is a lot of instruction going on, and our students are getting real good in grammar. I mean, they know grammar and they can diagram sentences, and they're getting very good, but you ask "How are you doing?" and they don't know what you're saying. Lots of

silent classrooms, ESL silent classrooms, where people are just sitting down, writing and writing and writing and writing? The most listening that they did was the 900 series, *English 900*, and the most that they did was all the recent exercises from *English This Way*. They used all the way to book twelve of *English This Way*. And I was appalled. Things were just . . . they just didn't have any relevance to the world, you know, what people were doing then.

So, when I started looking at that, I also realized that some people knew how to use the 900 series beautifully. They had been trained by the publishers, they understood the material, and they used them to perfection. And their students learned a lot. It was not grammar-oriented, it included a variety of things, and people who had never got into that kind of training used the book as a grammar exercise book and never knew what to do with it. Even the dialogues were copied, you know? And they didn't use the dialogues even to create some sort of situation where the people can pretend, do a role-play or something like that, and so that was very, very amazing. So, in discussing it with Tom Johnson, he said, "Well, go change it. You said you could train teachers, so go change it. Don't tell me, just go change it. I just don't want to see any blood in the surgery." I said, "Okay." [Chuckling] He has always had a

very special way of speaking, very colorful speech. So, after looking around and looking around and looking around, I said, "Okay, it's time to get a group together and start designing a curriculum that's more relevant."

So basic ed is already moving and it's already tied in with the vocation. ESL is still in this academic world, but it's not meeting the needs of our people. I mean, there are some people who don't even know what a verb is in their own language, how in the world are they going to understand conjugating a verb in English? And also you could tell. We started like in September, fourteen classrooms, and by November you have three classrooms. Something is not quite right.

WEST: That's right, yes. [Chuckling]

DORSEY: So, luckily for me, Dianne Pun-Kay had been hired. Dianne Pun-Kay had very, very good ESL training from the Peace Corps. She suggested another person, also from the Peace Corps, Mike [Michael] Wiener, and so Mike Wiener accepted a position. [Chuckling] And it was funny, they had Dianne teaching reading, they had Mike Wiener teaching history for the high school diploma program. It had nothing to do with their expertise. So I asked if I could make a switch of assignments and they said, "Yeah, go ahead."

So I switched some other people into those positions and I brought Dianne and Mike into ESL.

Well, Dianne and Mike had the background to make things work, and so, with the two of them and a couple of people who wanted to be part of the change, we started writing the new curriculum. And the new curriculum basically started with the things that people need to know in order to live in this society. We called it *survival*. We didn't call it *life skills* then. So we just wrote a list of survival skills. Then next to those survival skills we wrote what was the grammar that you use in order to teach that. And I always use as an example the doctor, going to the doctor. Okay, you go to the doctor, you tell what's wrong with you. What do you use, you use the verb *to have*, right? So if you're going to teach *doctor*, that's when you teach *have*. You know, "I have an earache, I have a stomachache, I have a whatever." So, what we were trying to do, or what we were trying to convince the teachers to do, is that instead of following grammar in order, you follow the situations in order and you plug in the grammar as it fits.

It wasn't easy. The surgery was not bloodless. There was quite a bit of blood. But some people left the program, they didn't feel that they could cope with it, and that gave us the opportunity to

hire other people who were willing to teach that way. And of course the major thing is: take away the books. Because as long as you hang on to *English This Way* or *English 900*, you are never going to change the way you teach—not that there is anything wrong with the books, especially with *English 900*. The books were good for the people who knew how to use them and had been trained in using them properly. So it was very difficult for a lot of teachers or potential teachers when they came for an interview and they said, "What book do you use?" and we said, "We don't use books. We allow you to be creative and bring in whatever you find comfortable, whatever you like." A lot of people couldn't do that. They just couldn't cope with it. They found that that was just more work than they wanted to do and too erratic.

As this is happening, our basic ed group is changing. We're getting more non-English speakers sent by Manpower; and it's like MDTA revisited, except that it's called WIN. And in WIN we're getting a lot of non-English speakers who also need to learn something to go into their vocation, and of course Manpower is saying . . . or EDD, the Employment Development Office is saying, "They need to learn English before they go and learn how to be a mechanic or how to be a welder." And I'm saying, "No. It's going to

take them forever to learn to speak English. They'll waste all their years in this and then they're never going to have any time to learn the vocation, so we cannot do that. We have to be able to put it together."

WEST: We had the same problem later in the GAIN [California's Greater Avenues to Independence, 1985] program when it started.

DORSEY: Exactly. I think the problem repeats itself over and over, and it's like a new set of players come and they don't know the history and they don't know how many times you've used it before. And it was the same with CETA [federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, 1973], and it was . . . like you said, it was the same with GAIN, and it was the same with the Refugee Projects when the refugees first came, you know? "How long can they be in an English class before they're ready to go?" And I said, "If you want them to be fully speakers of English, two years." "Well, there is no time for that. Can you give them English in three months so they can go into a vocation?" "Not unless we do vocational English as a second language." "No, no, no, no, no. We don't want that." Well, that doesn't work, you know?

[End Tape 2, Side A]

[Begin Tape 2, Side B]

DORSEY: When the refugees first came, Don [Donald A.] McCune [California State Department of Education, who had management responsibility for adult education, 1975-86] called and said he had to testify in Washington as to what would be the time necessary for the refugees to be on their feet and be self-supporting. My answer was, "If we can do together the vocational training and the language, two years." And they wouldn't hear of it. They said no. Their first solution was one year, which is ridiculous, you know? The first refugees, probably because they were the cream of the crop and they were educated people and you could get them . . . basically you gave them a refresher in English, and they had good skills and they could go to work. But as people started coming, we just didn't have this. We had people who didn't even have the idea that there was even a written language to begin with, much less anything else. And they didn't have the concept of working for somebody. There [were] a tremendous amount of concepts that had to be developed there when the refugees came that went beyond English as second language and beyond vocational English as second language.

The refugees, to me, [were] the turning point for the whole profession of English as second language. Up to that point, English as second language had been kind of like a stepchild of other

programs, and definitely second to bilingual ed[ucation] [which] was politically very active. And in many places, English as second language teachers were definitely bilingual and used the bilingual approach, and frowned on those of us who only taught the native language. And I was told that there was something wrong with me if I was embarrassed of my native language. It's not that I'm embarrassed, it's that there's a time and a place for it. And some people felt that the only way you could teach was bilingual.

When the refugees arrived, the Vietnamese refugees arrived, it opened a new world. And it gave English as second language definitely the position that it needed to have, and it brought to the forefront all the things that English as second language true believers have always believed in and nobody listened to. And it also brought to the forefront the need of teaching English with the vocational training, of teaching English for the purpose of surviving in this society. All those other things that had been talked about in small groups all of a sudden became important, and I noticed that legislation started changing in a variety of places and attitudes. It was the best thing that could have happened to the profession. It really made a major change.

And at our own school we had been playing around with vocational English as second language since 1968, that I know of. Maybe they played with it before that, but that I know of, since '68. We did having a teacher paired off with the instructor, like when I taught the dry cleaning, and basically the dry cleaning instructor handed me the materials, and it was up to me how I wanted to teach it or whatever. Once in a while I could talk to the vocational instructor and get some explanations, but in general, the vocational person was very focused on the vocation, and [they] were not trained teachers. They were great at what they did and could have an apprentice, but they weren't necessarily trained to be teachers. So it was, "Don't bother, you do that." And in fact the second dry cleaning teacher that we had was very upset when I got moved to do something else. He said, "Why? She knows all of the dry cleaning. She's an expert in dry cleaning." And I just started laughing. I'm no expert on dry cleaning, I have no idea how to do that. But in the teacher's perception I knew everything that needed to be done. So we had the responsibility of developing everything ourselves. Good or bad, we had it ourselves. But on the other hand, the vocational instructors had a lot of respect for what we were doing. So that was one variation.

Then working in the factory gave us another perspective: We need to focus on what management wants workers to know, and it [went] beyond just what they are doing on the job, [to] where they are going to be promoted within the job. So they need to know more of the workplace, and they also need to become more knowledgeable on the policies of the company and manuals and regulations and things like that. So it's beyond their work station and the language of their work station. And that was another approach, another way of looking at things. But again it was English-language teachers going [into the workplace] and absorbing it and trying to [develop an appropriate curriculum], [and there was] nobody else to tell us what it was that we needed [the students] to learn.

Then, during WIN and the CETA programs, other attempts were made. In fact, one of the attempts that we made was so interesting. We knew we couldn't afford teachers to be sent out into the vocational classes, so we tried one teacher and about ten instructional aides. And this was kind of nice. The one teacher's responsibility was to give direction as to how the lessons ought to be, and the instructional aides would go and work with the students who needed it. And it was fascinating because we had one

instructional aide assigned to auto mechanics, and maybe covered all the mechanics—brake and body and fender—another would cover refrigeration or whatever, you know?

And so the aides were outfitted with this little suitcase, their vocational English as second language suitcase, and that's when we started saying "vocational English as second language." And inside the suitcase there was a mini language master, and a stack of blank language master cards, a mini tape recorder and tapes, and of course the assortment of transparencies and pens and pencils and tapes and everything else, so materials could be created on the spot. They taped the lectures, then they went over the lecture with the students, stopped the tape when something wasn't understood, re-explained it, reviewed it, and things like that. So they had the mini-classroom in the suitcase. It worked.

The drawback was aides are not looked upon by the vocational instructors as equal, and therefore we had a few problems with, "Oh, I want you to do this, I want you to do the a.d.a. Go run these papers for me," which was not their role. And the instructional aides didn't feel strong enough that they could take the lead and say, "No, that's not my role." Now, the teacher in charge did quite a bit to solve the problem, but couldn't be everywhere at

the same time. So, when he's putting out a fire in cosmetology, something else is flaring up in auto mechanics. And so it wasn't the best approach, and actually the teacher couldn't develop materials for everybody on the spot. That was another big problem: We tried to do too much at once instead of taking one part at a time. But we learned. Mistakes are very helpful that way. We learn a lot from our mistakes.

Then when the refugees came, the approach was a little bit different, and it was definitely very interesting because even though the first Refugee Project was strictly for English, and it had to be separate from our regular classes and it had to be this and it had to be that, and it had to focus on certain things, and it was really very restricted, the first Refugee Project. We felt uneasy, and it created a lot of turmoil with our school because we had this separate group that wasn't merged with the rest of the population. It was like they were unique and different and whatever, and it created a lot of rift. The teachers that went to work there were resented by the other teachers. We had to have a whole gestalt situation later just to solve some of these ill feelings. And a lot of people did not understand; it wasn't something that we did because we wanted to do it, those were the regulations that came down. We had to do it that way. Luckily

the regulations changed rapidly when they realized that that wasn't going to work. The refugees needed to merge with the regular population where they could see that other students were learning English, too, to get inspired, and a variety of other things. And at our school, always trying to be a step ahead of everybody, we started looking as to how quickly they could get into an employment situation, and then we started moving them to the vocational training.

And Prop 13 [Proposition 13, 1978] happened. And Prop 13 brought some bad things and some good things. One of the good things that came out of Prop 13 is that Lynda Appleton [instructor, La Puente Valley Adult School], who was one of the casualties of Prop 13, for a few months volunteered in trying to help the refugee students that were already in their vocations. And it showed what was needed to be done at the vocations where the problems were. One of the stories that she [told] is that she's in the business ed department, in the typing class, you know, and one of the Vietnamese students is there taking the typing class. And the teacher is saying, "Her posture is terrible. She just won't sit up." "Ah! that's an expression, 'Sit up.'" She never learned that. You always learn "Sit down, stand up," when you learn English. And so

the student will [understand] the instruction you sit down, so she'll sit down, you know, and she's typing away. And then somebody says, "Sit up," so she relates it to "up," so she's up typing. [Chuckling] And the student could not make the connection [to] "sit up," could not understand what "sit up" meant. And those are the little things that sometimes cause problems. That wouldn't have interfered in the way she did the job; it interfered with her posture, and eventually she would have had a bad back. But there were so many of those little instances, and that as time went on, Lynda started finding out more and more and more and more things.

So, of the good things that do happen, after that, Lynda became the responsible person, administrator, facilitator, coordinator of the Refugee Program. And foremost in her mind was: If we want to get these people employed, we definitely need to give them the language support in their vocation. And having experienced it firsthand, she also knew from all the problems we had had in the past, the things that we had done right and the things that we had done wrong, we knew that we needed to have a teacher, a certificated teacher in the classroom doing the vocational English as a second language as an equal with the instructor. We also knew that we had to define the lines very carefully as to who's responsible

for what so nobody's feelings get hurt. We also knew that they had to work on equal footing, and that the people needed time to develop the materials—paid time to develop the materials—because if you didn't have that, things weren't going to work. So things we had learned from the past definitely made sense. And the rest of the story, I think you know it better than I do because that's where you came in.

WEST: And Nick Kremer [instructor, La Puente Valley Adult School].

DORSEY: And Nick Kremer. And both you and Nick Kremer had probably the best backgrounds for that kind of situation. Both of you were people who could speak with the vocational instructor with just the right amount of kindness and the right amount of self-assurance [so] that the vocational instructors would not feel threatened and would feel that this was *really* useful to them and they could work together. So it became a collaboration, you know, which is different than working in a team situation. It's a collaboration, both together, the vocational instructor and the ESL instructor, are writing the materials, are developing the materials, are checking back and forth that things are right, are working together as to what is it that the student needs. And I think that was a very, very nice arrangement,

and wonderful materials came out of that. New welding materials,[1] the *TELE-VESL* [*Business Telephone Skills*],[2] materials that Carolyn Feuille [VESL instructor, La Puente Valley Adult School] did. [The curriculum was developed at La Puente Valley Adult Schools and later published by the Alemany Press.] And it was just wonderful. It was probably one of the best situations. Of course, it's expensive. That's the problem: you are paying for two people at the same time. And when there are supported programs such as the Refugee Project to take care of that, that helps a lot.

But as a sideline, one of the things that has always been fascinating at Hacienda La Puente is that under the direction of Tom Johnson new funds were always looked for. Everybody always had their eyes [open] as to what new kind of money could come in, and use that as seed money to develop things that later we would have to support out of our regular a.d.a. monies. And I think that's creative. From my perspective, it's the best way to use grant monies, rather than: You do this, and then when the grant monies disappear, everything disappears with it and you have to start all

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[1]Linda L. West, *Vocational ESL: Welding*, Hacienda La Puente USD, 1980, and The Alemany Press, 1984.

[2]Carolyn Feuille-Le Chevallier, *TELE-VESL: Business Telephone Skills*, Hacienda La Puente USD, 1981, and The Alemany Press, 1983.

over from scratch when you get new grant money. Tom Johnson's process, from my perspective, is a better use: Use it as seed money to develop something that can continue later on.

And I think the monies were well used, because a lot of the materials that were developed, and a lot of the know-how that was developed, especially in vocational ESL at the time that there was money available, later was moved into the vocational ESL lab and used there, where it left only one or two instructors, an aide, to assist the students more on an individual basis, some spontaneous grouping or specific grouping for specific things. And the new version, we call it VAST at Hacienda La Puente, which is Vocational Academic Skills and Technology Center. And that is moving it one step beyond; it's using technology for achieving the English or academic skills necessary. And now it has merged English as second language and ABE students, so it's helping both kinds of students there. And it's really very interesting. You can see it and you can see the participation of the vocational instructors, also.

To give you an example, the warehousing instructor, none of the students will get a certificate of graduation unless they have completed certain academic lessons. So they have to achieve those

lessons in order to complete their warehousing training and get a certificate. On the other hand, they can walk into VAST at any time to put a resume together. They have a template in the computer for a resume that expedites the process and prints these gorgeous resumes that students can take to employers. So they can walk in at any time and print a brand-new resume to take wherever they are going to go for a job interview. So that's another service that is very worthwhile for the students. The auto mechanics teachers have contributed a lot of materials, and especially a lot of internal engine kind of diagnosis tools that are the state of the art now in most shops. So the students actually can use the computers there and learn how to operate [the diagnostic equipment], which is what they are going to be using when they go in the shop. A lot of things are done now with technology, so technology is part of the academic learning now.

And it's just interesting, it has opened a brand-new world and it has expanded the scope of vocational ESL and the vocational academic skills. So I think we're in the right direction now. Every little step has given us another way, and now it's funded out of the VATEA [federal Vocational and Technical Education Act] monies. So again, one more time we're using the federal monies to design

something that is going to be useful in generations to come, in years to come, and so we continue the same tradition, which is very, very good.

[tape turned off]

WEST: The CBAE (Competency Based Adult Education) movement greatly impacted California Adult Education in the 1970s and the 1980s, and you were closely involved in it. The state sponsored several CBAE curriculum development projects. What was the involvement of the local programs in the development of this curriculum?

DORSEY: I think local programs were involved even before it was called CBAE. The name CBAE didn't come until much later. In adult education there has always been this sense of doing things as a group. We did one curriculum development during a great influx of Cuban refugees, so several projects were funded in the state, and they were to develop curriculum—it must have been around 1970. And it was very interesting because we had one of those projects. Ours was very small in comparison to San Diego [Community College District] and L.A. [USD], and I don't even remember the others, but we started doing our curriculum based on life skills, and attended a meeting at the State Department [of Education] Office in L.A., and these people from the College of the Desert had their own

ideas [about] a grammar-based curriculum, and I felt very young, naive, and unschooled to speak in front of these doctors of language. But evidently my body language was saying that I wanted to say something, that whatever was being said I wasn't agreeing with. And Bob [Robert] Rumin from L.A. said, "Okay, stop. Holda, say what you want to say. It's okay, say it." So that's when I said that we needed to focus more on the life skills of the people. We didn't call it life skills. You know, I said on the survival skills and people being able to use the language when they went out in the community, when they saw their doctors, when they got their driver's licenses, when they went shopping and so forth. Because otherwise we were forcing people to stay in their own neighborhood and only communicate with those who spoke their language, because they would never have the facility to communicate in the real world, and we would continue to create the ghetto mentality of just staying within this area where people speak my language. Luckily for me, Bob Rumin, Jim [James] Figueroa [Administrator, Los Angeles USD], and Ruben Zacarias agreed with me and had the same ideas that I had, and we became fast friends immediately, almost instantly, and to this day we have remained friends. We looked at the progression of people in the educational system as [going] beyond

learning certain things [grammar], [and] giving them the opportunity to merge in our society, if they so wish. At least they have the tools to do it.

From there, the movement started spreading very rapidly. Region IX, which was the region that we belonged [to], set up staff development with federal funds that were dispersed to Far West Laboratories. And Far West Laboratory did a few things of bringing people together, but most of the things they did was give money out to people who wanted to do in-service. And so, aggressive that we were, we would always apply, and all of a sudden I started wearing the hat of in-service of the region. So some of my good friends, like the people from El Monte, the people from Alhambra, West Covina, which is called Tri-Community [Adult Education], Whittier, Montebello, formed like a consortium where we would get together and talk about curriculum needs, staff development needs, and then plan one or two activities a year that Far West would fund to either bring experts or to pay our own teachers to do presentations or whatever. That worked out very well.

At that time also, John [H.] Camper [Consultant, California Department of Education] was instrumental in getting curriculum going for the basic education focus. John gathered a committee of

people from up and down the state, and it was really interesting because we met and it was like: "In these three days we have to write all the curriculum and all the lesson plans that are going to be needed for . . . blah-blah-blah-blah." It was interesting how much we actually produced of the work. And John was also instrumental in moving some of the staff development monies to some of the organizations like CCAE so that teachers could attend CCAE and participate in staff development activities there. It was not a very far-reaching effort because obviously only those who were members benefitted from it, or those where the administration were members and encouraged their staff to participate—like in the case of Hacienda La Puente it would work. Or those like having the consortium that we formed in the San Gabriel Valley wanting to apply for funds, and somebody willing to manage it, in this case being me, you know, manage the funds, pay the people, do all the paperwork, do the paperwork to give credit, university credit through Cal State L.A. [later, California State University, Los Angeles], and run the service, but it required doing the course outlines and everything else, you know, so the teachers that came could get that kind of credit.

There were very, very good efforts, and I think it gave us a sense in the San Gabriel Valley that all of us were focusing in the same direction and we were all moving together as a group, our teachers. And to us it was a benefit also because we shared some teachers. Not everybody had full-time teachers, so we shared. Some teachers worked with us part-time, and part-time with Alhambra and so forth. So we all had the interest of investing in those teachers, because even though they were called *part-time*, they were full-timers by the time you added the hours that they worked in all the different districts.

It was a lot of hard work. It meant not only all the preparations ahead of time and putting the programs together and the flyers and everything else, but also getting there at the Hudson Campus at six o'clock in the morning to turn on the ninety-cup coffee pot and make the coffee, and bring the doughnuts and all the sandwiches, and have the sandwiches ready, and do the registration, and putting the signs on the doors as to where the meetings were. It was mass production that required a tremendous amount of extra work, but that worked. It was good. It did very well.

We did workshops with Far West forever. APL [Adult Performance Level Study] came about in '75. When the APL Study came out, Hacienda La Puente participated in this study.

I have to make an aside. I always felt strongly, and I think I learned this from Tom Johnson, to participate in anything, any survey, any field testing, because whatever results were going to come at least included our students. And when it included our students, I knew that it at least will fit somewhat what our students have said, that it was relevant or not relevant, or useful or not useful. Where, if we stayed out of that participation, then we couldn't complain of the results. And I wanted to make sure that our students were represented, because an awful lot of paperwork that we had to do had nothing to do with our students' lives. For example, in what is called now 321 [authorizing section of the federal Adult Education Act] Reports—you know, the reports that we did then which were 306—then we had to. . . . You won't believe this, Linda. At the beginning, we had to do one paper per student, and it was about maybe thirty questions on that paper, you know, which was in four copies, and besides writing the student's name and whatever information, they had questions like how many televisions in your house, how many bathrooms, how many this, how

many that. Incredible! I mean, questions that are, of course, not permitted to be asked today. We had to do *one per student.* It was incredible.

WEST: This was for the state program?

DORSEY: This was for the federal!

WEST: The federal program reporting.

DORSEY: The federal program reporting. It was incredible, okay? Then they streamlined it and it wasn't that bad, but it still was so irrelevant. How many got their high school diploma, how many enrolled in college? At Hacienda La Puente, to me it was: How many joined vocational classes? How many got a job? So, being different, I just started writing my own categories on the forms and putting numbers next to it. Well, our consultant, which at the time was Warren [W.] Brenner [Consultant, California Department of Education], just called and said, "You can't do that!" [Laughter] And I said, "Well, then you tell them to change the reports. This is ridiculous. Our ESL students don't come here to go to college. Maybe they'll go to college five or six years from now, but not now. Right now this is what's happening, and it's more important if we [report] that." It's been my pleasure to see that all those categories have been added. And the forms that I [see] nowadays reflect a lot of those things that

I wrote by hand and that people complained [about]. They also wanted scores on the ESL population, reading scores. So I balked at it and I said, "No, I will not report it." And I just wrote in there, "Give me [an] appropriate test to test the ESL students and I will give you a report." And I did this several years in a row. The state department probably never included my reports to the feds because I was so mean about it. But somebody listened and somebody heard, and eventually we had an assessment system.

[End Tape 2, Side B]

[Begin Tape 3, Side A]

DORSEY: So somebody did listen, and eventually we had our own assessment design.

But back to APL. So, in '75 when the APL Study came out—it was like, "Ha! what have I been telling you all along?" All these things that people should be able to do, they cannot do. They cannot function in society because we're not teaching that. So Tom Johnson took offense to that study because he said he could have told them that without having to spend a million dollars on a study. But like many things, it has to take a serious study like that to open the eyes of the unbelievers. And that put another emphasis on what staff development ought to be: applied performance levels, or adult

performance levels, and applied knowledge, as to how you have to apply [language learning] to real life, transfer [skills] into real life.

And so our staff development for that year was fascinating. We hosted it at Alhambra. It was the first time that it was not going to be at Hacienda La Puente. We had made a decision in our little group that some of the coordinators, facilitators, resource teachers that were really the shakers and the movers of the ESL world or the ABE world needed to have some visibility in their own districts. So, if we rotated our major staff development, then they would have that kind of visibility. So Jo Smith [ESL Coordinator, Alhambra Adult School] was the first one to say "Okay, I'll host it." So she hosted it, and the design for that one was that APL would be the major thrust. We would have a general speaker that would talk about the APL findings, and then we would break up into groups and all of us led groups—Jo led a group, I led a group, or whatever—and we would have the teachers select the topic, the level of instruction that they wanted to address, and write a series of lessons to match that. It was wonderful, and we published a very good book, actually.[3] If you haven't seen it, and I don't know where to find one, it has a tree in the front that says "APL," it's the trunk,

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[3]*ABE + ESL/APL,* Hacienda La Puente Unified School District, [1977].

and then one branch says "Community Resources," and another one says "Consumer Economics," and. . . . And it's really very pretty. And these are compilations of lessons written by all the staff that participated from Hacienda La Puente, Alhambra, El Monte, Tri-Community, Whittier, and Montebello. We did a wonderful job. It was probably one of the best in-services, and the teachers walked out feeling like, "My god, now I have something in my hands that will help me teach."

WEST: And that year was. . . ?

DORSEY: It was between '73 and '75 [1977], somewhere in there, and I can't pinpoint it. You know, somewhere in there in the APL. In my mind I make divisions of "before Xavier," "after Xavier" [del Buono, California Department of Education, Deputy Superintendent, 1974-1986], okay? And so this is before Xavier.

As things started moving in that direction, other projects started coming out. Clovis Adult School got real busy doing the Project CLASS,[4] and again having teachers writing materials to address the APL competencies. LAUSD looked at it for their high

[4]*Competency-based Live-Ability Skills*, Clovis Adult School, 1979.

school diploma program and created the LA CAPS.[5] Some of the materials from the LA CAPS are not only useful for the high school diploma program, a lot of it can be used in the advanced ESL classes. They are very relevant. I was looking at them this past week for another purpose, and I found that, my god, they're still on target. You know, it's really interesting to see that.

Then a project called Cal Comp [California Competency Project] came about. And Cal Comp is like California Competencies, and it dealt mostly [with] designing the California Competencies for high school and ones that would be common to everybody, to several districts. We still did not call it competency-based at that point, we still focused on APL, trying to go that way.

On the side, there was another project that I felt was really fabulous that came about. It was the ICB-VESL, Integrated Competency-Based Bilingual Vocational English as a Second Language.[6] It had everything in there. Those are probably some of the best employment-oriented materials that can be used not only in a separate classroom when you have people that are going to go to

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[5]*Los Angeles Competency-based Achievement Packets*, Los Angeles Unified School District.

[6]Chinatown Resources Development Center, 1977-80, later published as *English That Works*, Scott-Foresman.

work, but within a regular classroom where you do just a short occupational knowledge, you can pull information from them. The materials are marvelous. Hacienda La Puente had the opportunity to field-test them—again, like we volunteer to field-test everything—and the moment we field-tested them we just knew these materials are a winner. You know, they're wonderful, wonderful. And they are used to this day, not necessarily as a separate curriculum, but as part of the regular curriculum [when] occupational knowledge is being presented. And for those students who are interested in occupational knowledge, it's just wonderful.

There was another project that we participated in that was also worthwhile because it made the teachers feel good about what they were doing. I don't know if it had a specific title. I called them the Palomar Tapes,[7] and this was again one of those funded programs that were just short.

WEST: That was more in the staff development area, right?

DORSEY: But it was in the staff development area, because each tape highlighted a teacher in a particular technique. At Hacienda La Puente we did two of them, and they were absolutely wonderful. I

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[7]*Classroom Strategies: A videotape bank for English as a second language and adult basic education*, San Marcos, CA: Palomar College, [1976-78].

have lost track of the tapes. I don't even have one. I had the complete set, I don't have one, and I do not. . . .

WEST: They're out of print. I was trying last week, as a matter of fact, and I made contact with Palomar because I had a question, and they're not available from Palomar anymore. So, if you find them, I need them for the archives. [Chuckling]

DORSEY: Yes, I've been looking for them too because I thought they would supplement a lot of the materials that had been developed later, like the ESL Institute tapes, but I haven't run into them; and I have really looked through all the closets over at Hacienda La Puente, and I can't find them. They will be there one day. One day I'm going to run into them.

So there were a lot of really small programs here and there, you know, and I feel that at that point the adult education teachers felt that they could be working together and learning from one another. And the State Department of Education, I feel at that time is when they had a change of administration. And again I can't put my finger exactly on what year, but it was between '73 and '75 [1974]. And in retrospect now, you can see that there was a design that I really did not know. Maybe some other people in higher-ranking positions would have known the design. But it almost fit.

You could see that there was this working on the high school diploma, and this other project working on staff development, and this other project working in this, and this other project working in that, and how everything was kind of coming together. They all were interrelated. And as an observer, I thought that was fascinating how things were merging, and there had to be a plan to get someplace. Well, eventually the plan materialized. We had a couple of conferences, still under the auspices of Far West. I don't know if they were called Cal Comp conferences or what, but they were statewide conferences, and that was interesting. Up to that point, only state directors of adult education got together twice a year. There was nothing else, unless if you went to CCAE. And so this was fascinating to have a statewide program. Granted not everybody went, maybe four or five people from each district went, but it included counselors, it included teachers, and in some situations—

WEST: That's the first state CBAE conference, '74, in San Diego?

DORSEY: Yes.

WEST: And then there were others, yeah.

DORSEY: I don't think we called it CBAE the first year. We did?

WEST: I think so.

DORSEY: We did? Okay. Somehow the name CBAE doesn't . . . I cannot pinpoint it with that year. And this was still organized by Betty Tucker [Far West Laboratory]. Then John [W. Tibbets, Professor, San Francisco State University] and Dorothy [Westby-Gibson, Professor, San Francisco State University] were introduced, and that was probably the best thing that ever happened to us, you know, to have John and Dorothy being involved. A couple of years later the staff development money went to San Francisco State University, and then it became officially Competency-Based Adult Education. And that's when you could see how everything had merged: the staff development, the guidance, the curriculum design, etcetera, etcetera.

I had the privilege of being on the advisory committee for CBAE, and our main task was to figure out how to disseminate to the field a complete change of approach, and to make sure that everybody would change. It's interesting how we can look back and say, "Okay, how do we make people change?" Well, we have to study change and we have to decide that we have to have teams, the administrators had to understand it in order to support it, we had to have the counselors present because otherwise the counseling component needed to be part of it to guide people properly,

instructors definitely had to be there because the instructors were part of the overall component, evaluations had to be presented. And we did a lot of hard work, and the outcome of that particular group, one of the outcomes was a whole manual on competency-based education implementation,[8] which has the administration of competency-based programs, guidance services, and we removed the word *guidance* from counseling, because in many schools the function is served by other than credentialed counselors, and then it has a very strong instructional unit as to how to design your instruction in a competency-based manner. It has a strong assessment component. I think it was one of the best documents of the time because it was very, very complete and done very seriously.

In the meantime, staff development had to go on. Whether we had this book written or not, staff development had to go on. Basically we were divided. Each one of us of the advisory committee had a region, and my region was [the] greater Los Angeles [area], with Orange [County], except L.A. [USD]. L.A. [USD] always stands alone because they are so massive. And my responsibility was to organize and provide the staff development

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[8]California CBAE Staff Development Project, *Handbook for CBAE Staff Development,* Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1983.

activities that were necessary for that area, and we had a little bitty budget to do that with. It was enough for us to continue the same kind of regional activities that we had been doing before as a group, except that now the group included Torrance and other schools and made it broader and larger. And it was an awful lot of fun because now we had really massive meetings of change agent persons designing the kinds of activities that we needed to provide. And our in-service became a lot more sophisticated, not only with presenters and speakers, but expanding beyond ESL and basic ed, including other areas such as administration and counseling, instructional aide, assessment, paperwork, all kinds of things. Record keeping was always a must. We did a lot of sessions on record keeping.

And also a new facet developed which I thought was very interesting. The consultant to the State Department of Education became more involved in what was happening in the region, as far as their needs for staff development. So basically we worked as pairs, consultant and region representative—you know, calling each other and making referrals to each other. For example, at that time Tom [Thomas J.] Bauer [Consultant, California Department of Education], was my partner. So Tom would get questions from the field that would be better answered by a practitioner, so he would

refer them to me. I would get questions that definitely were none of my business, like "When is my encumbrance letter going to come?" and that definitely was the role of the consultant. So we worked together quite well in setting up [regional assistance]. And when he visited a district or an agency, he would find that there were certain needs in their staff development, so then he would tell me so I could organize them, invite them, and have them come visit, whatever. We did a lot of classroom visitations also. It was nice.

A lot of things were happening. CBAE is taking care of the staff development; at the same time, assessment has become a major and important tool, so CASAS [California Adult Student Assessment System, now Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System] is born. I think CASAS came from people who felt that we were supposed to assess, but there were all these assessment systems out there that had never been normed on adult education students, [the] adult education community had never been asked to give input, and if we were going to have to show any kind of measurement, and not only if we were going to have to, if we wanted to do any kind of assessment to go hand-in-hand with our instruction, we'd have to design our own. Luckily the State Department of Education saw that that was logical and CASAS came about.

CASAS originally was the California Adult Student Assessment System, now being Comprehensive [Comprehensive Adult Students Assessment System], because they comprehend more than California. [Chuckling] It's wonderful. And like most things, you know, it had its problems when it was born. Originally, at the very first meeting, most of the information that was being given out focused on the high school diploma and on reading, and I was one of those persons that just said, "It will never work with ESL. It will never work. This is totally inappropriate. No way!" [makes grousing noise], you know, and a temper tantrum. And so Ray [Raymond E.] Eberhard [California Department of Education, Consultant, and later Administrator, Adult Education Unit, 1988-present] just laughed at me and said, "Okay, calm down, calm down. It will work. Let's hear what are your concerns?" So I went on and on and on, you know. "If you don't do something with listening, this is never going to work. If you are only going to assess reading, you are putting the ESL students at a disadvantage." And on and on and on and on, you know? And oh, surprise, they listened! And through the years, it's been what, fifteen years now for CASAS? One of the things I have seen with my own eyes, with my own experience: If you tell them, they listen. Every meeting I've ever

gone to, every comment I have ever made is taken note. And I said, "You know, I don't like the way this is here. You should ask this question." Okay, the following year it's there. Do this, the following year it's there. It doesn't happen instantly, nothing happens instantly, and with limited resources, less, you know, but things do get done.

The beginning of CASAS, in spite of my outbursts that it would never work, was definitely . . . the idea was wonderful. They had forty districts, more or less, representing everything, you know, large districts, small districts, community college, community-based organizations, you name it, the whole spectrum. And these people got together, brought their course outlines, and selected those competencies that were common to everybody. So what became *the* CASAS list was basically the common ground of all these districts. Now, districts later on could take that, adapt it, enhance it, delete some things, but at least they had the beginning of a competency list from which to create their curriculum. I do feel sad when people say, "Well, we teach the CASAS competencies," because that to me [means] they haven't done their work, which is: Go back to the users, go back to the students, find out if this is relevant to them. Check it out with your community. Is this what is useful in there?

You do have to make those adjustments. You can't just take it in black and white and this is what I'm going to teach. It might not fit.

I'll give you an example. In one of our locations—because we have made adaptations even by location—in one of our locations we don't teach transportation. Those students know more about transportation than we will ever know. And we'll skip post office, or the money orders. They know more about money orders. They can teach me, you know? We teach other things that they don't know. In another location we don't teach banking. Those students own banks. What are we going to teach them in banking, you know?

WEST: [Chuckling] Right.

DORSEY: Our very rich Chinese who are owners of banks, forget it! Why do we teach it? They can teach us investment and all that other good stuff. But there are other things that are relevant to them, so that's where adjustments have to be made. And so you can't just say, "This is it." And that's what's beautiful about CASAS, there is that flexibility. You have this basic list [of competencies] from [which] you start creating your own [curriculum].

And as far as the assessment is concerned, well, I have to admit I love it because we have field-tested every single thing that they have ever come up with, so I know that as things are being

normed, they have been normed with my students. So it makes sense to my students and it works for my students. Through the years, things have improved. Through the years, it has become a little more streamlined, easier to manage, or it could be that our knowledge has grown and therefore we're more comfortable in using it. There are people who are not comfortable using it, and there are people that say it doesn't work. Well, if the curriculum is not a life skills curriculum, it's never going to work. You know, you just cannot make applesauce with pears. It just won't work. If you teach grammar, no, this is not the best system to use.

And also you should look at it as an assessment system, not just a test. And that's a concept that sometimes is even difficult to transfer to the students. The students want to know if they've passed, if they pass, if they pass. And you have to really say, "You never pass the test. You always have to be somewhere in the middle. If you answer everything correctly, the test is too easy. I have to give you something a little bit more difficult, another test, because I need to know what you need to learn, otherwise we're not getting anywhere." And if you explain it, the students understand, and the students are very, very happy. And if you use it also as a way to diagnose what the major areas of need in your group [are],

the students . . . they're adults. They can rationalize, they understand. And if you tell them this is what you're looking for, and you don't have to state names, but show a graph of what were the areas that most people missed, and the students are delighted to say, "Yeah, I can do this. You're right, I don't know this, I don't know that. Yeah, I need to learn it." Then just give them a choice: "Okay, what do you want to learn first out of these six things? Put it in order." Then the students are happy because they feel that they have control as to what they're going to learn, and they're willing to continue coming to school because it makes sense. So it's a wonderful tool if used properly, and it's also a wonderful tool if you use the *whole* system, because then it makes sense for people. So we have CASAS here already designing the assessment. It's like we are going backwards, right? We have an assessment that's going to drive the curriculum. Well, that's what happened. And then we have this program also that works with the staff development, so they are starting to go together, almost everything.

And I don't know, I felt that whoever at the state department was planning this, I always want to give credit to Xavier del Buono and to Don McCune, and maybe it's to their credit, maybe not, but I like to give them credit because they were the people in charge at

the time. And it was a cohesive plan to get the whole state to move in a new direction. And it took, it really did. I don't think you go to programs now where there is no competency-based [curriculum] being spoken about. And when the ESL Model Standards [of the California Department of Education] came out, [and] the whole series is one of the nicest documents that has come out in a long, long time in adult education, it was beautiful to look at the things that were written as to what the standards are. And then I heard some people saying, "Oh, my god, now we have to start this from scratch, throw out our curriculum and start designing a curriculum to match these standards." No, that's not what we're saying. What we're saying is: "Look at your curriculum, compare it to the standards, and see where it fits."

In Hacienda La Puente it seemed like our curriculum was so old, so obsolete, so. . . . No, it wasn't. We took it exactly as it was and worked level by level: "Okay, what's relevant to your level? What matches the standards in your level?" "These are the standards of what we want done in the beginning levels, beginning-low." "Okay, what from this curriculum fits and what doesn't fit? What skills are you addressing?" "Oh, we're doing listening and speaking." "Well, what happened to reading? Do you have any

standards for reading?" "Okay, then we'd better add reading because we don't have it." Okay? Or, "We have too much reading. Oh, we'd better add some of these." As we have gone through it, for the teachers it has been such a pleasure to see that the things that they teach are validated there. They are on target, they've been doing it on target, and somebody is telling them, "Now we'll put it on a piece of paper." Oh, wow, great! They all feel like: "Great! This is fantastic!"

We just finished the advanced level, and that's the end of our alignment, right? And it was fascinating to see where we have gone, because our advanced level has now research on-line, self-learning activities, research and report back. So the teachers that were in the committee said I had to write a letter to their administrator because these things need to be in the classroom. Classrooms have to have different sets of encyclopedias, they have to have the ability to get on-line. They have to have this. And it was funny, one of the teachers said, "This will force *us* to learn more about using the computers, because we have to make sure that the students know it." And it was just like, "Wow! Isn't that magnificent?"

Some things were upgraded in the curriculum, some are still exactly the same. So we just updated it to what's new nowadays, and

the change [made some differences], see? We aren't just: "I am the teacher and I teach." Now it's: "I'm the facilitator of learning. And by the time the students are getting to the advanced level, they have to know and they have to learn, with my guidance, to stand on their own two feet, because from here they go out, and they have to be able to survive out there. They can continue learning on their own; we don't need to set up any more levels after this." And it's just wonderful. It's wonderful to see that the teachers have come to that realization of: "Yeah, I have prepared my students to go out and continue."

So all the things match together, and CASAS is listed in all of them. Staff development has to be listed because the teachers feel that there are certain things they need to learn in order to be able to facilitate this curriculum, and it matches the standards because there are certain things people have to be able to do. At the advanced level they have to be able to do research and reports. You know, on the job it's going to be necessary many times to do reports, so it's just nice to see how things just click, click, click, click, click all together.

WEST: You've talked about the Staff Development Project that was run out of San Francisco, and you mentioned CBAE conferences.

DORSEY: Ah, yes!

WEST: There was a period that you were very heavily involved in the CBAE conferences, and then there was a period in the '90s that you ran the statewide staff development program. So tell us a little bit about those things, too.

DORSEY: Well, the conferences, the CBE conference, or CBAE—it was called CBAE, then CBE—it was very interesting. At first it became the responsibility of the major projects. CASAS ran it one year, CBAE Staff Development Project ran it another year, and DNAE [Dissemination Network for Adult Education], which we haven't mentioned.

WEST: DNAE.

DORSEY: Yes, which was another very important branch of this massive, cohesive, comprehensive program, ran it another year. The DNAE was the Dissemination Network, and that was the branch that disseminated all the wonderful products that everybody produced, so they wouldn't be stored in cabinets or closets, you know, but everybody had the opportunity to see them.

The best part about DNAE, from my perspective, is that they published this wonderful newsletter that went to *everybody*. Every single teacher that registered received it free of charge. It kept

people informed, it talked about new books, new materials, new products, new whatever. It was a wonderful tool to keep information flowing. And I think during that period that teachers at large and instructional aides felt that they were part of something big because they all got their personalized copy, and that made a big difference. So the three projects rotated the responsibility for organizing the conference. And then, for some reason, it ended up being the sole responsibility of the CBAE Staff Development Project.

My responsibility through these years as part of the advisory committee was that I always had ESL planned to organize, in cooperation with [K.] Lynn Savage, but Lynn focused a lot on the vocational ESL, I focused on the [general ESL],

[End Tape 3, Side A]

[Begin Tape 3, Side B]

DORSEY: [and] so other people had responsibilities: Cuba [Z. Miller, Vice Principal, Sequoia Adult School] had the responsibility of doing the guidance, and Autumn [Keltner, professor and coordinator of non-credit ESL programs, San Diego Community College District] had the responsibility of setting up the administration. And it was really very, very good. We planned hard, we got feedback from prior conferences and organized the strands and the presentations that

would be done during the strands, found speakers that were relevant, because in some cases we had speakers that highlighted certain points for a strand, and sometimes we had just general speakers. I think that we did an awful lot of good work. Among the conferences, one year [in 1985] we did it together with the national Adult Competency Education [ACE]. We did the conferences together. I had the ESL strand, but I also had a partner from the national level doing the ESL strand. So it was very exciting to do that conference. We were coordinating, doing the conference together all of us.

I loved the CBAE conferences. I think this year and last year I felt the loss of that conference more than anything else. It was a great opportunity for people to share what they knew and to learn new things, and it was the one time when everybody came. It was definitely a major, major, major [conference]. I also know that for some of us it became exhausting because you came to the CASAS sessions two days before, then you came to the pre-sessions, which were intensive training on the day before the CBAE conference started, then you were there through the CBAE conference, which was Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. So basically you spent a week, and your brain was exhausted by the time you went home, but it was very worthwhile. I really think that everybody learned a lot at that

conference and a lot of good ideas were shared. I wish we had that again. Hopefully CCAE has taken up some of the slack with their state conference, and some of the regional [conferences]. CCAE and CATESOL [California Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages] are taking some of it. CATESOL runs a *wonderful* conference for the English as second language teachers, but [CATESOL's membership is] so spread from the K-12 to the university level that sometimes it's difficult for the teachers to focus to things that are pertinent to them. And it's good for them to go to a conference like that also because they need to be exposed to what's happening in the field. And CCAE presents what's happening in adult education, but the field sometimes is very narrow because traditionally administrators have gone to the conference rather than teachers, and teachers only go to the one day. So, hopefully, one of the two organizations can capitalize in expanding to include more of what's relevant for adult education as a whole.

Back to CBAE. Several other things happened with CBAE besides conferences. There were also several instruments developed that were very, very useful. ISAM [Institutional Self-Assessment Measure]. We as practitioners need an instrument that could help us see how much we have moved toward a total competency-based program, and ISAM did that for us. And even now ISAM is still

relevant in looking as to is our guidance component doing what it should be doing? Is our instructional component doing what they are supposed to do? And is administration giving all the support necessary and fulfilling their part? I think the instrument is wonderful, even nowadays, for the adult schools to kind of have a check mark and plot where they are and where the need to go.

TIP [Teacher Improvement Process]. TIP probably could have been better than [it is] and used more than it has been used. It's one of the nicest, nicest instruments for looking at what's happening in the classroom and having a good mentoring discussion with the teacher. Unfortunately, in some districts they felt that [because] they had a special kind of process for doing evaluations, they couldn't bring [TIP] in. And it's a shame, you know, because [TIP's] not the same. It's a different kind of evaluation. Evaluation of teacher performance for writing their evaluation purposes is one thing. This is a teacher improvement process, and it doesn't have to be done by the administrator, it could be done by another teacher. It could be done by a mentor teacher, especially now that we have mentor teachers in adult education. And I think it's one of the nicest tools. I hope it could be revived now and used again, and the existing mentor teachers taught in using the TIP as a way of working

with their mentees, because it's a really wonderful tool that should be used.

Then, as time went by, one year I had the opportunity of having to be the co-chair. . . . I called myself the conference coordinator. I don't like the title of *chair* because I don't like to be the one that has to stand up in front of the group and make speeches. So I don't mind doing all the work behind [the scenes], but don't [make me] stand up and make speeches, so *conference coordinator* is a good title. So the State Department of Education really needed to get this going, and contracts were between phases, and so Margie [Margarita M.] Parulan [administrator, Baldwin Park Adult School] and I had the responsibility of putting together the CBAE conference in four months. From November [1988] to March [1989] we had to get a full state conference done. And we've never worked so hard, the two of us. [Chuckling] You know, it was really hard work, of twelve-, fourteen-hour days to get it done. But we did get it done. It was in Sacramento at the Red Lion Inn, and I think it was a *wonderful* conference, very, very well-attended, and I was amazed that we were able to get it done that well and that fast.

Also, that was the introduction, that conference was the kickoff introduction to regional centers, to the regional centers which now are called the SLRCs [State Literacy Resource Centers].

And as we introduced the regional centers and we had the opportunity to have all 321 providers in one room meet with the regional centers and explain what future responsibilities or services would be provided for the regional centers. It was interesting because I don't think we've had the opportunity to do that since then, of having all 321 providers in one room at one time and having the opportunity to meet with other people and voice their concerns and their ideas on the things they would like done in their area and things like that. It was good. It helped announce it, it helped for recognition purposes, because you know that's one of the problems we have in adult ed. A new program gets started and then it's like, "Okay, when does this come? How do we let everybody know? How can we inform everybody that it exists?" So that to me was a very positive ending on that conference. And later on, the resource centers, regional centers—SLRCs, as their names have changed—have really provided a very important role in the activities for staff development because they are close to the grass roots where it really needs to happen as to inquiring and finding out what's going on and what needs to be done in a particular area. And now I'm going to stop.

[Session 2, September 29, 1995]

[Begin Tape 3, Middle of Side B]

WEST: This is Linda West interviewing Holda Dorsey in West Covina, California. We are continuing our interview on September 29, 1995.

Holda, you've been very active in adult education professional organizations and encouraged others to be active. Please talk about the role and significance of the professional organizations and give some specifics of your involvement.

DORSEY: I'm glad you brought it up, Linda. The professional organizations are the vehicle that allow us not only to grow professionally and to keep in tune with what's going on every day in adult education but also to communicate with our peers in a more relaxed way.

CCAE was the first organization that I got involved with. I think I mentioned at the beginning of the interview that I had made a presentation within a year of working in adult ed for the CCAE South Coast Section Conference. From the very beginning, Tom Johnson used to encourage everybody to belong to CCAE, and I tried to encourage other people, and even to this day I encourage people to belong to CCAE. The California Council for Adult

Education is the one and only organization that represents all the segments of adult education, and only adult education. Before, it was the place where we all met together to discuss all the new things that were going on. Now it's taking an even broader role and focusing quite a bit in lobbying and preparing legislation, and then advocacy [for] adult education. [CCAE] is the voice in front of the [California] legislature that represents the interests of adult ed. For some people it is difficult to understand. ACSA [Association of California School Administrators] represents administrators; CATESOL, the California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, represents the English as second language discipline only, but also from K to the university level. So adult ed is not always in tune with what CATESOL wants to endorse, where CCAE focuses strictly and only in adult education. It also accepts as members administrators, secretaries, teachers, anybody who is interested in adult education, friends of adult ed also.

It's kind of sad, we don't have as many members as we would like to have. There are over 2,000 members, and that has been steady in the fifty-some years that the organization has been in existence, but people in adult education come and go. We have new members coming in, with new teachers, new staff, and other members move on to bigger and better things, or at least to different

things, and we recruit new members all the time and lose some of the ones we had before.

Anyway, CCAE has been important in my professional life, and I also have been very involved with it. Jokingly, everybody teases me, I think I've done all the chairs in the organization, not only at the local level but at the section level and at the state level. I've done all of them. I've been treasurer, I've been secretary, I've been historian. In fact, in the South Coast Section I was assistant treasurer and secretary and treasurer twice. So, at one time or another, I have always had some sort of board position within the organization. Also, I was very, very involved in the organization of the South Coast Section Conferences. I was conference chair several times and I was program chair for the conference probably at least ten times. I don't have it in front of me, but Jo Smith from Alhambra took the time to research it and find out all this stuff, and I was surprised at how many times I have been involved with it.

TESOL, which is the international organization, or the parent organization for all the teachers of English as a second language, or teachers of speakers of other languages, is a very interesting organization, and elite and quite impressive in its size. Being international, it has members from all over the world. I became involved with TESOL in the early '70s. I was fascinated by the kind

of people and the kind of presentations that were being done the one time that TESOL came to Los Angeles—I think it was '74, I'm not exactly sure. But I was just overwhelmed. I had never seen anything so great, and so many things to choose from.

So, being involved with it, before I knew it I was *really* involved with it. They asked me to be part of the conference committee and do workshops for the 1976 TESOL conference in New York, one of the few times in my life that I asked other people for permission. One was my husband. My husband was surprised that I even asked his opinion. [Chuckling] I asked Bob Rumin from Los Angeles, and I asked Tom Johnson, my boss, because it would require having some extra time to be doing this job. Bob Rumin encouraged me quite a bit because he said it was the first time that TESOL had even bothered to invite somebody from the West Coast to be part of their conference. Times have changed, haven't they? [Chuckling] Now a lot of the people from the West Coast are very active in TESOL. So I accepted, with the blessings of all these people, and I'm telling you, I've never gotten myself into such a tremendous amount of work. Probably one time in my life that for about eight months I would worked around-the-clock. I worked in my regular job, and then at 7:00 in the evening I would pick up the TESOL things and the TESOL papers and the TESOL

calls for presentations that were arriving, and I worked until 7:00 the next morning, being on the telephone probably from 3:00 to 7:30—3:00 in the morning to 7:30 in the morning—with people from New York, from Afghanistan, from England, from all over the world. It was incredible. I lost fifteen pounds in the process. I looked great. [Laughter] It was really, really interesting. And then when I got to go, obviously, to the conference, it was very, very interesting to see how everything that I had planned on paper came to be. And that to me was probably a great training experience in how to put part of a conference together, experience that I got to use later, not only with TESOL and with CCAE, but I got to use it with even some strange conferences like a First Annual Conference on Adults with Special Needs. I was surprised.

In that [special needs conference] I was really responsible for logistics, from renting the hotel and all these other good things that had to be done, and selecting menus, plus selecting workshops, plus assigning things. And what was interesting in that particular conference that made it a little bit different is that [in addition to working with] adults with special needs, a lot of our presenters and a lot of the participants had special needs themselves. So we had to have a cadre of interpreters for the deaf. One of our keynote speakers was deaf herself, so we needed to have reverse interpreters,

the ones that voice what the person is signing. We had people that needed wheelchair access to all the facilities. It was an experience again, you know. Incredible. And the quality of presentations was really worthwhile.

A few years later [July 1991], I co-chaired the Adult Literacy and Technology Conference in Costa Mesa with Shawn Brown, and that was another new experience, because this time it was bringing in technology and having lots and lots and lots of equipment for everybody so it would work, everything would be just the way it was supposed to be. And again logistics is the most important part: making sure that everything is in the right place at the right time and everybody is where they are supposed to be. I promised myself after that one I would not do a conference ever again. I've done three major national conferences and I never again want to hear [about] organizing one. It's an experience. Everybody should have it at least once. [Chuckling]

But I think the work that I did with CBAE and the work with CCAE and the work with CATESOL, all of that [developed] some of the expertise and know-how that I [used] in my role with the OTAN, the Outreach and Technical Assistance Network. The first five years of the OTAN contract, one of the segments of OTAN, the *T*, was the training, or staff development, delivery of staff

development throughout the state, some through the resource centers, some organized through the central office. It was a most exciting job. For me, it wasn't so much the setting up the workshops; I [saw] myself as a broker of staff development. People had a need for this, I found the appropriate presenter, I put them together, I sent out the flyers and did all the registration and all those other little details. And it was fun. The presenters thanked me because they had a great experience showing and demonstrating their abilities to other people, the participants thanked me because I had brought this great presenter to them, so everybody was pleased. Isn't that a wonderful job, where everybody that you deal with says, "Oh, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you! You did this for me. . . ." So I had a wonderful time.

Another advantage of working in that capacity there is that it was a good learning experience for myself, and maybe you feel the same way since you still continue in the OTAN project. It brought together some almost middle-aged people with experience in adult education and some very, very young, wonderful people with all the technology necessary. So it was a good marriage of experience with the new technologies. I think we all benefitted from it. I know that for myself I learned a tremendous amount just in working with these very young people that have a different outlook in life and a

different way of communicating and perceiving and even doing their work. Because it's so easy to do everything via computer and a modem and a panel and this and that, things that we had never heard of before, and all of a sudden we're learning by leaps and bounds. I know that for myself it changed not only my whole attitude at work and the way I performed the work, but it has changed the way my whole family communicates because we all communicate via modems now regardless of where we are. So it has made life a lot more interesting, and part of it was the experience that I had here.

[tape turned off]

WEST: Holda, you've been an advocate of providing support services to adult students to remove barriers to attendance. How was that accomplished at Hacienda La Puente, and what support services were provided?

DORSEY: That's a great topic, Linda. At one time, and even now, the monies now are called 321, the monies that come to provide some sort of support to the English as second language and adult basic education students. When it says in the regulations "to support and not to supplant," immediately it reminds me of one of the things we did and we have always done at Hacienda La Puente. A long, long time ago when I started working as an administrator of the ABE project,

one of the things that I learned from Tom Johnson is you use your basic monies to pay for basic things, and you use your other money as seed money to do new things or to do the things that you will have to do without when the monies disappear. So, even before it was written in the regulations, at Hacienda La Puente we were using the money to kind of enhance the programs. So we did all kinds of creative stuff.

The first thing we did was child care. It was almost impossible for parents to come to school if there was no child care, so we started child care. In fact, we started baby-sitting. Nobody would call it that nowadays, but that's what we had to begin with, and later we became more sophisticated and having actually a child development program. But to us it was important that there would be somebody who could watch the children in a quality way while the parents were in class.

Then we started doing transportation. Some people can't walk [to school], and you know what the transportation system . . . public transportation in the Los Angeles area [is like], and especially in Hacienda La Puente, it's the pits. There is nothing. So there is no way people were going to even be able to use public transportation, and walking twelve miles or ten miles, or even two miles, is a major problem. So we were able to provide

transportation. We had the school buses going around and picking up the students and bringing them to school. And they ran around the whole district a good every two hours, so we were able to bring students at different times during the day and take students home at different times during the day. Even though the service was provided primarily for the ESL/ABE students, it's kind of ridiculous to say you can't get on the bus because you are going to auto mechanics. So it was open to all the students, with its primary focus being on our ESL/ABE students. So, in a way, we became also transportation arrangers because we changed route[s as needed]. In an open entry program you have students from different areas, so the route has to be changed to accommodate the students. It was really worthwhile.

The other part we did was recruitment. Recruitment and outreach has always been the mainstay of the 321 program. You've got to go find the people who don't come. A lot of people are not going to tell you, "Here I am, I'm illiterate, please teach me." You know, people don't admit it, don't want to say it in front of anybody else, so you have to go doing the recruitment. We set up a real interesting recruitment program, and we called it the Streetwalkers, as terrible as it sounds, but it was fun. [Chuckling] We hired five ladies, and they were very well-trained in kind of making

conversation and doing a little bit of questioning. They went from door to door in the neighborhoods and really knocked on the door, interviewed the people, and we always tried to approach it from the point of view of "Maybe you know of someone who might need this kind of services." And we distributed information about our classes and talked about it, and if they were willing they could get signed up right then and there. And then many times our recruiters, or Streetwalkers, would put the people in their car and bring them to the school. That way they knew the person would lose some of that fear of, "Well, yeah, I'll go, but who do I talk to? How do I [find] it?" So they could bring them directly, or make an appointment to pick them up another day and bring them to school. We recruited a tremendous amount of students like that, not only for the ESL/ABE classes. We recruited people for the high school diploma, for auto mechanics or refrigeration, for some of the vocational offerings. It was one of the best recruitment systems we've ever had.

And another area that we felt was necessary that we had to give the students some support. . . . Many times students don't come to class, or they are in class—we're talking about adults—with a multitude of problems. And they can't pay attention to whatever they are learning because they have other things to worry about. You know, where are they going to get food? They don't have the

appropriate clothing, so and so doesn't have eyeglasses, so and so this, so and so that.

So we set up a community liaison person. It's a position that the elementary schools had, and they made a liaison between the parents and some agencies or whatever was necessary. So we just piggybacked on what the K-12 had and set up our own community liaison for our ESL students basically. This person would find an outfit or an agency that would donate glasses, would find a doctor that would be willing to test the hearing of students, somebody else that would be willing to test their eyesight, somebody else that might be willing to have complete outfits for children that were going to school. It was a person also that made the contact with the bank when the person was having a problem, would make the contact with Immigration, with the health center, accompany people to the bank to cash their checks—a variety of things. You know, it's a multitude of things.

Number one was: You've got to be able to talk to somebody. So you need to have somebody who makes that contact. You can tell the student, "Oh, just go to the employment office, or go to the health department and they'll take care of you." They won't go because they are afraid to ask. But if you make the appointment for them and then you say, "Mary is waiting for you at the health

department and she will talk to you tomorrow at 9:00," then the person is more willing to go. Also, if the person says, "But I don't have a car, how do I get there?" "Okay, I'll take you. You get to school and I'll take you." Then our community liaison will go with them, and "Mary, this is the student that I was talking to you about," and the problem is solved. We were able to help a tremendous amount of people like that.

I have one story that to me is really special. This student of ours, her name's Sandra. Sandra was one of the many students that listened to the presentation from the health department on breast cancer and breast self-examination. So she had questions, so she waited until all the other students left and she talked to the person from the health department. And the person from the health department brought her into my office, I had to leave the office, they closed the door, and evidently an examination happened there. And then Mrs. Valenzuela from the health department said, "We need to do something about this person. This person needs to have something taken care of. Now." Evidently she had massive lumps all over. So, immediately our community liaison got on the phone—you know, who? who? who? who? who? Well, we found out that there is a doctor at Queen of the Valley that will treat her. Now we needed the entry there. So I was desperate. I called Tom

Johnson, our director, and I said, "Tom, this is the problem. I don't know what to do. We know that there is this doctor at Queen of the Valley that can take care of it but we don't have a way to communicate with the doctor." He said, "No problem, I'll call him. I know him." So he called, and this lady went in that afternoon. This lady was checked, it was not tumors and it was not cancerous. It was such a relief. Everything was taken care of within two hours. Even to this day I get goose pimples, you know? [Chuckling] What's good about her is that this lady was so impressed, not only she finished school, she went on and she became a teacher. She teaches in El Monte Elementary School. So I think that's wonderful. She felt that what we did for her was worthwhile and she should be able to transmit some of that information and help others. That to me is a good story.

WEST: Oh, that's wonderful. Yes, definitely.

DORSEY: Unfortunately, many of these things cannot be done nowadays. There is just not that kind of money. So some things we've had to let go of them. We still have a child care center. We don't do as much recruitment, mostly because we are within the cap. What are we going to do with the rest of it? You know, we don't need any more students; in some locations we don't even have the space.

[End Tape 3, Side B]

[Begin Tape 4, Side A]

WEST: Holda, you have been an employee of the school now known as Hacienda La Puente Adult Education for nearly thirty years. You've talked about open-entry classes, life skills emphasis, linking of academic and vocational programs, funding of support services. What were some of the other internal policy decisions which shaped the school?

DORSEY: I think there are a couple of policies that have had a tremendous impact, not only on the school and programs but in the quality, which I think makes a great difference. One is the policy of hiring people full-time, not only ESL teachers but other teachers, vocational, high school diploma teachers, etcetera. Our district has set up the policy, and Tom Johnson, in his very pragmatic way, he always said, "Pay somebody twelve hours and you'll get ten hours of work. Pay them thirty hours and you'll get forty hours of work. Whether it's true exactly, maybe not quite. But if the teachers are treated as professionals and they feel that they are earning a living wage in one district, they're going to stay with the district. And I look around in our own district, and the new people on the staff are people who have been there seven to ten years. Those are our newest. Not that we don't hire new people, we do hire new people, but in general people get hired and stay and stay and stay until they

go on to bigger and better things, like you. [Chuckling] So those things to me are very rewarding, because we end up with a committed staff that 100 percent of their professional time is spent on adult education and their contributions are significant.

The other thing that I feel our district has is that from the beginning of collective bargaining the teachers were accepted into the collective bargaining union. But even prior to collective bargaining, the adult ed teachers had a seat on the negotiating council. So, even before collective bargaining, our teachers had already negotiated the different steps in their salaries, they had negotiated the same equal paychecks, same as the K-12, they had negotiated their holiday pay, they had negotiated their Easter and Christmas holiday pay, and an awful lot of other things that other people don't have. In fact, I ended up sending copies of our agreement, teacher and district agreement, to other districts who are just now starting to have their teachers in either a unionized capacity or where they have representation.

WEST: Statewide this is a problem with all of adult school teachers, the part-timer issue.

DORSEY: Yes, it is. And the part-timer issue has other implications that really annoy me. I'll give you one example that really annoys me. We all have friends who are the "freeway flyers." You know, they work ten

hours in this district, ten hours someplace else. In all the districts they are paying STRS, State Teachers' Retirement System, but STRS only gives them credit for one district. So here they are, they're paying the equivalent of their thirty hours of work, but they only get credit for .3.

WEST: I didn't know that. That's true?

DORSEY: It's horrible. That is true. That is true.

WEST: That's terrible.

DORSEY: CCAE has been fighting with the STRS on this. STRS is using the same formulas that they use for K-12 with the adult ed teachers. That doesn't work. No, it's been horrible. Even at Hacienda La Puente we have had some problems where people are saying, "Now wait a minute! How come I only get credit .9? I was here all year." Or, "How can I get credit . . ." whatever, you know? It's been a major problem.

I do know of one individual from a district east of here that challenged STRS, and STRS returned the money that they owed her, and returned the money to the district. The district contributes also. So her district was able to get the money back that they had paid into her that they wouldn't give her credit for. And that's another thing that I find annoying. Why return the money? Why

not just give them credit? That's something that you are going to need. They have no mechanism to do that.

So adult education teachers in a part-time situation are getting hurt in a variety of ways. So, not only not being able to have benefits, but also. . . . The teachers have proposed, "Well, what if we could buy into the benefit package by pooling from the different . . . the income from the different districts?" But no, no district wants to accept that. So there are an awful lot of inadequacies with that. So no wonder somebody asked me one time, "How much longer are we going to be training teachers? It seems that forever there are staff development programs." Well, we have great staff development programs, and we're always training wonderful teachers, and they get to be real proficient, especially in ESL, and they are picked up by a K-12 to go teach in their high school. Why shouldn't they go? Why should they continue to work in adult ed if they cannot get benefits or other things? They go to where they get paid better, they get treated in a responsible manner like a professional. And we're losing an awful lot of people. Hacienda La Puente has been luckier than most, and I think it's because we have had the policy of hiring full-time teachers and having the benefits, the same benefit package as the K-12 teachers, and the same kind of stipends and other things that go along with the teachers.

This year was kind of interesting. There was a COLA [Cost of Living Allowance] for the K-12. Originally there was no COLA for adult ed. There was a question as to how could the COLA be used. Well, at Hacienda La Puente the teachers' union was in negotiations and they stood with: The raise goes for everybody, not just K-12. And it's very comforting to the adult education teachers to hear the K-12 teachers say, "We all go together. We all get treated the same." It makes us feel good, you know, we're part of the same group. On the other hand, I understand from the administration point of view it puts administration in a real awkward situation, because if adult ed doesn't get that COLA they still are going to have to pay it. So we have to send a message to the legislators: You can't divide the groups that way. You've got to treat the professionals altogether as a group with the same kind of worth.

There is a message that came through the e-mail in our district about all-day staff development days for everybody, clerical, janitorial, teachers, administrators, everybody: there will be no classes that day. Before I left my office, I never got clarification if it included adult ed. Because we know we don't have those days for staff development that the rest of K-12 has. K-12 has days that the legislature approves for staff development, community colleges have

days for staff development, the only segment of education that doesn't have it is us. We don't have professional staff development days. That's an inadequate system. But maybe one day all of us together will be able to make some changes there.

I was talking before about recruitment of students and how we had to stop the recruitment effort because we couldn't accommodate even the students that we have now, in some locations especially. With the dwindling resources, several things have happened, you know. One, we can't go around picking up people. We don't have money for transportation anymore. We can't afford it. On the other hand, these people need to be served. It sounds easy: Well, set up a class in their community. It isn't that easy when there is no space in the elementary schools that they can give us a room in which to set up a class, or we just don't have the money to rent church space the way twenty years ago you could get free space from a church or from a factory or whatever. Not anymore. If you don't rent it, you don't get it. So we have to become a little more innovative and try to find new ways of approaching these people.

IRCA [Immigration Reform and Control Act, 1986], and the Amnesty times showed that there were people out there that we were never serving. People—you know it—came out of the

woodwork to English as second language classes, and some stayed more than the forty hours, some only came for what was necessary and disappeared again. It's not because they are not interested in education, but I think the inconvenience of going out at night in the dark, walking or on a bicycle, with lack of transportation, considering how many frightening things happen in our neighborhoods, it just doesn't encourage adults to go out seeking an education. They'll forego it. So we need to be looking for new things.

Luckily, the state department was able to set up a new initiative they called the "5 percent innovation," [Innovative and New Technologies Five Percent Funds Project]. Well, several districts, including ours, wrote a proposal to how we were going to use our 5 percent for that, because it's not a project and it's not an entitlement. You know, you just decide that 5 percent of your a.d.a. will be allocated this way and we will use it in a different manner. And what we proposed to do, I think it's the beginning—not the end, just the beginning—of trying something new for reaching this population.

And we're going not door-to-door yet, but we are going from elementary school to elementary school, and we're catching the parents as they drop off their kids. They come to the elementary

school, they have to walk their two miles or three miles. By the way, our district doesn't offer transportation for the kids anymore either. That's how bad the situation is, you know? So the parents walk their kindergartners or first-graders. And so we show up in a little van where we have all of our materials set up, and those parents who are interested—we've done a lot of campaigning with the principal and with the elementary school teachers—will come to our little van and they get a very quick assessment, and they get the materials and they take them home. Now, we asked the students what they prefer, audiotapes or videos. It's really interesting. They prefer videos, the majority of the people. Nice. They have videotapes, they have cassette tape players. They do have those things. And they are willing to take it. And you hear them say, "Hmm, when the baby takes a nap, that's when I'm listening to my lesson." Or, "I wait until my husband comes home from work and we do it together in the evening." So, you know, we're even getting the husband, even though we don't have the husband registered or anything else, but that's okay.

WEST: It's really a family project.

DORSEY: It's a family project. You know, kids are helping their moms or their dads with it. The tapes go around and get loaned to other members of the family. The conditions are very simple, you know?

You get registered, here is your material, you take them home, you bring them back in a week. So far we've lost one tape. We have had over 2,000 students that we're serving this way. We're in thirteen elementary schools and in one junior high, and we're bringing three more elementary schools on board in October. We started out of the trunk of somebody's car. By now the staff has increased. We have a lot of people [participating]. Everybody prefers 8:30. Do you blame the moms? You know, we tried ten o'clock. Forget it. They're not going to walk one time with their kids, go home, walk back again. So we either catch them when they drop off their kids or when they come to pick them up. And they would prefer early in the morning, and then they have the day to do the rest of their work or whatever else they have. It's been very, very successful. And the videos are absolutely wonderful, and it's been a great idea. We have to give credit to L.A.[USD]. L.A. has created the majority of the videos, and they are being very generous in letting us have copies, as many copies as we need for this [program].

Now, when we first started, it was so neat. We just went and got everything that was on the shelf that had to use some sort of equipment. Not just paper and pencil, it had to have some sort of equipment, and we got off the shelf everything that was not being

used. Then we sent a flyer to all the teachers, said, "These materials have been on the shelf for a long time. Do you have any plans for using it? Otherwise we're going to put them to use in a different program." And only one response came. We pulled out that little piece of material that a teacher wanted for her classroom—we didn't want to have the same things in the classroom that people take to study at home—and we set up the program, and then we added new things that we bought specifically for this program.

Our plans are growing. We're going to do two more things. We want to go on cable, and we are in the process of making all the arrangements and that, but we are setting up our own videos that are going to be fed through cable. And we have an 800 number that the students can call. That way they don't even have to go to the elementary school. They can call the 800 number, register in whatever language they speak through the 800 number. We will mail the materials to them, with an already stamped envelope for them to mail it back, the paper materials. So they can watch the program on cable, we'll be showing it every day in the morning and every day in the evening, so this will be another way for those that don't get out. The ones that have children to take to school have to go to the school, but there are other people whose children are older and walk by themselves, and they're not going to make that

four-mile trek to the elementary school. So we might as well. You know, we'll do it through cable, and we'll do everything by phone if necessary, 800 number so they're not afraid to call.

The next [thing] we want to do is add computers. Now, we went around and around in the loaning of computers. Well, that gets very complicated, especially when the resources are so limited, so we have ordered two motor homes that will be delivered in January. Inside they are specially made with tables and hookups, and we will have laptops all set up around it. And we will be parking some again at elementary schools, some will be parked at the health center and several other locations in our district. And again there we will be dealing with the high school diploma program and other programs. And we plan to use them also to teach computer applications in the City of Industry. Our district is so neat. It's the city of Hacienda Heights and the city of La Puente divided with the City of Industry in the middle. The City of Industry, as the name implies, is nothing but industry. And we figure there will be at every location at least five people who might want or need to do a spreadsheet or might need to learn a word processing document or a database application. So why not? We'll offer it for a price. The purpose of offering it for a price is to help defray the cost of what we do early in the morning with the ESL

students. So that's part of our dream. Eventually we would like all of this learning to also go on the Internet and really do more distance learning. We just have to wait.

We did a survey to see how many people were on cable, had cable, so we are safe in knowing that the students, our potential students, have cable. Because sometimes even in an apartment complex they all pay for one drop, and everybody gathers in their main room or whatever to watch whatever cable programs they want to watch. So we know we can reach a lot of people this way. But the first time that we did a survey of how many people had computers, we came back with zero, you know?

WEST: Mm-hmm, not ready yet.

DORSEY: So we're not ready for that, but we're getting there. And as more libraries and other locations start setting up computer and on-line situations, then our students will be able to move into it. I find it very exciting. This is opening the door to something new, a new way to reach people that otherwise would never be educated. They want to be educated, they just don't have access to it, and we have to go over there and provide the access. That's the only way. I find that very, very neat.

WEST: Holda, because of your background, you are uniquely qualified to reflect on the needs of the adult Latino immigrant population in

California for education services. You have been involved in field initiatives and state projects directed at this population. What can you tell us about the needs of this population and the specific efforts to meet those needs?

DORSEY: This is probably one of the most difficult questions to answer. I've been giving it an awful lot of thought: Why are the Latino immigrants a little bit different? And I'm going to backtrack to: they're not all immigrants, some are from here. And it's very difficult to say "the Latino population," because there are so many different parts of the Latino population and they're so different. When we talk about the Asian population, very easily we know that they have different languages. You know, there are Chinese speakers and Japanese speakers and Korean speakers and Vietnamese, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. When we talk about the Latino population, they do have—in general—they have the common language of Spanish, whether they come from Guatemala or Argentina or Mexico, or any part of Mexico. But there are other things that are in there, in the composition of the Latino population, that you probably could write twenty books about it.

First, we have to go back in history and remember that this [California] was Mexico at one time. And so, for a lot of people, they've been here for a lot more years than the Anglo population,

and they have been here for generations and generations. So they feel like, "Why, yes, this is my land. I've always been here. My family has been here for 400 years." So that's one kind of population, and their needs are different. In some cases it has to do with language, not because they don't speak English, but because English is not their standard language. Their standard language is . . . I call it sometimes Spanglish because it's a mixture of both. And it's not really even a mixture of both. It's English with a smattering of Spanish here and there, you know, that just gives it color.

Then there is also the immigrants and, I don't know, they're not real immigrants. It's better to call them "migrants." These are the ones that come and go, come and go, and they've also done this for generations. In many cases they've done it for over a hundred years. People from the deep . . . from way south in Mexico, in Oaxaca, and this is past Acapulco, way south, and they move up to Michoacan, and then they move up to Sinaloa, and then they move up to Baja, and then they come to Fresno, and then they go back again to Oaxaca. And the following year they'll do the same. Many of these people don't speak Spanish, which is almost a shock to others. Not only they don't speak Spanish, they don't talk to anybody. They stay all together in their little group and they only

have a spokesperson who's the one that does the contracting of the work, the contracting of where they are going to stay while they work, and the one who collects the money for everybody, and they just follow as a group. They've done that for several generations. And some people who have studied these migrant patterns can track down: this [is the] group of people who move all the way to Fresno, this group of people goes to Madera, this group of people goes all the way to Oregon, this group of people goes to Chicago. That's a different kind of migrant, and it's a different kind of Latin person with very different needs. And some of their needs don't require that they learn the language. They are illiterate, but they are illiterate in Spanish also. They don't speak English, they don't speak Spanish either.

WEST: What do they speak?

DORSEY: A variety. There are some that speak Trique, there are some that speak—

WEST: Speak what?

DORSEY: Trique. Don't ask me to spell it, I don't know how. [Chuckling] Some are Kanjal, some are Zoque. I know there is a tremendous mixture of languages in that.

WEST: Are those Indian?

DORSEY: They are Indian languages.

WEST: They're Indian languages, I see.

DORSEY: And then you have the people who are well-educated that come to the United States not to stay but to explore to see if they like it here or not like it here, and then they will go back. There are the ones that are not educated and are looking for a better life and have the desire to try something new, and they just come to see if there is something new or not.

Then there are others that I find very interesting. They have come with this migrant population, and then they find out that their mother was actually born here, or their father was born here, and they have all these other relatives. And before you know it, they say, "Well, I'll visit with my relatives for a while," and then they'll stay. And they are like in limbo; they don't know if they belong here or they belong someplace else.

I mean, it's really almost every one, and I hate to say it is so individual, there are definitely some groups, but they are all very different—very, very different, with very different needs. And some are not interested in staying. Some just want to come and work and go back. That makes the Latino population completely different than people who come from other ethnic groups or other kinds of nations.

WEST: And have made the decision to emigrate and are not going back.

DORSEY: Europeans in general, I would say, they have consciously made the decision and prepared for the emigration. They have studied the language, economically they have put some money aside, or they have made the necessary contacts, whether for work or with family, whatever, before they come to this country. So emotionally and economically and linguistically they are prepared. So when they come, they come delighted to be here. They're planning to make the rest of their life [in this country].

WEST: And they have the immigrant transition and they have their stages and their problems, but they get through those in a fairly predictable way almost.

DORSEY: Very quickly, right. Then you have the refugee who comes in shock, or at least the ones we got in '75 to '78.

WEST: The Indochinese refugees.

DORSEY: And all the Cuban refugees and the Haitian refugees that came later, the Russian refugees that have come. These are people who are practically picked up and dropped in the culture, and they're like in culture shock. They weren't sure they wanted to come. Maybe it was the most expedient thing in the moment.

WEST: Or maybe their country doesn't exist anymore.

DORSEY: Exactly, they have nowhere to go back, they are completely uprooted, and they are in shock. It takes them a while to either say,

"Okay, this is where I'm going to stay. I might as well." But in general it takes them quite a few years before they even think of, "How am I going to live here?" They go through the motions of learning the language, getting ready for a job, but research has shown that almost a year and a half later they go into a nervous collapse. So that's another thing.

But the Latin American ones have always felt real comfortable walking in and out. It's like they come to visit. It's like there is no border. I heard a term one day, and I don't know how politically correct it is, they call them *transnationals*. They go back and forth between the nations, feeling comfortable and at ease in their circumstances.

Now, where do we start educating them? Do we start educating them when they recognize the need or when we recognize the need? That's a difficult question. Because we recognize the need, does it mean they have it? Or should we wait until they recognize their needs?

WEST: The answer usually with adults is that they have to know that they have the need.

DORSEY: Right. I feel that way. I feel that that's what it is. And you can see almost a pattern. Amnesty was a pattern. They had the need, forty hours; educators were upset, forty hours was not enough. Now in

retrospect I can say Immigration probably made the right decision. Forty hours was not a burden on anybody who already had a life set up in certain ways. Those who had already made the decision that they were going to go to school, they could do forty hours or more, no big deal. But for those who it was only going to be a requirement, and it was going to disrupt their lives in the organization that they already had, do the forty hours and out. And I think we all saw that.

So now [Proposition] 187 has created a completely brand-new group of people who feel the pressure of becoming citizens. Amazingly enough, it's not necessarily these people who became legal permanent residents during Amnesty; a lot are people who have been here for thirty, forty, fifty years. And you say, "My gosh! How could you be in a country for those many years and not learn the language?" Well, it wasn't needed. They didn't even internalize that they needed it. But now it has become a matter of necessity.

WEST: They see a reason: they need to vote. [Chuckling]

DORSEY: They have a reason. Absolutely. They need to vote. You said it. Some people say, "Oh, it's because they want the services." It's not the services. It's being able to vote and have control as to the decisions that affect their lives. So it's kind of interesting. It's going

to be fascinating what happens when all these people do become citizens and vote and start voting.

WEST: And start voting. Things will change.

DORSEY: Things are going to change. It might not be comfortable for others, but things are going to change. I think that as adult educators we have to be very conscious of some . . . cognizant is a better word, of some of the needs of the population and not try to lump them together, because they are a little bit different. We have some Latinos who have absolutely zero literacy. And like I told you before, they don't even speak Spanish well, and in some cases they don't speak it at all. So where do we start? Do we start with native literacy?

I believe that native literacy is important, and in one of the many Latino initiatives we tried . . . we called it the U.S.-Mexico Adult Literacy Project. It was very interesting. The history of that project is interesting because it's one of the few times that I've seen a project that starts from the top down. It started with the presidents getting together, [George] Bush and [Carlos] Salinas de Gortari.

[End Tape 4, Side A]

[Begin Tape 4, Side B]

DORSEY: And then the directors of adult education. Also, there were representatives from elementary education, secondary education, adult education, and universities. So altogether they made agreements as to cooperation and trade, kind of preliminary to NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement]. It was very interesting. Some states have really carried out some programs at the elementary level that they call Hands Across the Borders. There have been programs at the university level, [for instance] the University of New Mexico has set up a specific program in school administration for Mexican schoolteachers who are planning to become administrators. They're set up completely in Spanish so the people will come, take those course, get their degree and go back. They are not set up in English so they are not tempted to stay here. They're going to go back to Mexico as school administrators. And a variety of things.

California adult education got involved in setting up literacy classes, trying to use the literacy approach, or the approach to teaching literacy that the Instituto Nacional para la Educacion de los Adultos in Mexico has set up. We were fascinated with their program and their materials, and their approach. They use a very Freirian [Paolo Freire] approach of someone in the community becoming the facilitator of learning, mostly volunteers, and so they

have developed the materials to go along with it. They have cassettes and videos and workbooks, etcetera. Recognizing that there are so many Indian languages, they also have the materials in thirty-one different Indian languages, which is incredible.

And their Indian materials gave me an idea, because their materials are in the Indian language and at the end they start transitioning into Spanish. So I felt that we could use their materials to teach literacy in Spanish and then start transitioning into beginning literacy in English classes. So the idea was to give the students literacy in Spanish to empower them to participate and benefit from the ESL instruction. The country of Mexico was very generous. They gave us literally one ton of materials. I had to go to the airport to pick it up and it was one ton. And we sent them out to twelve different places in California that use them, loved them, set up their program after we did training with their volunteers. And to this day, they have been very successful. The California Adult Education Project stopped in '93, and then the projects, these sites continue because the consulate offices, and there are thirteen Mexican consulates in California, took over the responsibility of continuing to disseminate materials. So [the Spanish literacy program] has expanded. I sometimes get calls, like the other day, from a library program in Newport, and they are

getting their materials from the Mexican consulate. It's kind of exciting that that has continued.

We in turn were able to help our Mexican counterparts by sharing some of our staff development models. They were fascinated with what we have done with video in order to train teachers, and they were also very interested in some of the things that we have done in vocational ESL because they were interested in doing something similar in their *maquilladoras*, which are the U.S. or Japanese factories that are set up at the border, where a lot of Mexicans are moving in to work, and they need to have the language of the job. So that's kind of interesting. You know, at least we were able to contribute something to pay back.

Other states are experimenting with the secondary program that Mexican adult education has in order to prepare students for the GED. We didn't. In California we felt that we would try the literacy and then we'll see what happened from there. So far it's been successful.

So the new initiative [incorporates] a new way of looking at the Latino populations, [and assumes] the literacy is taken care of, so [now] what [should we do]? And also our ESL classes can take care of the [language needs] of the students well, because we do an excellent job there. We felt that there were certain topics and

certain cultural things that for a new immigrant have not been approached. One of the things that teachers in general felt is that there were things that the students needed to deal with and learn more about, but the teachers didn't have the time to look for the information or to even locate it. They didn't even know where to find it. So the new project, the Latino Adult Education Services, which I'm now involved in—

WEST: As director. [Chuckling]

DORSEY: As director. And I'm working together with Ed Kissam, who is an expert in researching all kinds of Latino migrant problems, and with JoAnn Intilli, who is an expert in evaluation. We have now a series of materials that you could call instructional modules, and they are very interesting. They have a basic overview as to why the topic is interesting and of relevance to the Latino population. Then it has a list of teaching points, the real meat of the information that the students are going to have to grasp. Then it has a list of instructional activities, suggested instructional activities, so that teachers could pick one of them or two, or create their own, you know, and there is a list also of the kinds of SCANS [Secretary's Commission on Acquiring Necessary Skills] competencies that are addressed or that could be addressed with that. And we have added a very detailed lesson plan, and I'm talking about every five minutes

what do you do, very detailed with all the handouts and everything else.

When we first shared the materials with our focus group, the focus group was delighted. They felt that that's what they needed: "I don't need a lesson. If you give us a lesson, fine, but what we need is this information. This is what I cannot go and get." For example, what are support services for injured workers? Those are the kinds of things that sometimes an ESL teacher doesn't know. And they don't have the time to go and find it, find that information, so they have this information with the highlight of the points, highlighting the teaching points that the students really need to know and the kind of forms that the students need to get, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. And the alternatives, because there are a variety of forms of support services. So it's information that can be role-played, can be discussed, it could be a group within the classroom that's studying it. They are kind of self-standing, these modules. So we are designing them for the higher level. If you want to look at ESL levels, we say, sixth and seventh level in the [California ESL] Model Standards, you know, the advanced level of English. We are looking now at populations that are arriving, immigrants that are well-trained, have some sort of educational background, in many cases even a college degree, and their lack of

know-how of the system does not allow them to move rapidly into the world of work. Sometimes they are working as dishwashers when they have a degree in engineering. So hopefully some of these materials will expedite their moving.

We're trying to do something else besides that. We're also trying to instill the self-learning attitudes, and this is a little difficult because it's not culturally embedded in the students. Students are accustomed to being taught. Teacher is dispenser of all knowledge. In the workplace nowadays they want people who can look up information and take action by themselves, not just wait for somebody to tell them what to do. So within the modules we are trying to build in a lot of "You have to look it up, you have to research it, you have to discuss it with a group, you have to negotiate with a group, you have to come to consensus," and those kinds of skills that they are going to need in the world of work and that hopefully they can learn to start looking for things for themselves. As I told some ESL teachers, part of the focus of this is to get the students out of the ESL classroom. [Chuckling] It's funny, you know. We dealt with bringing them into the ESL classroom and the literacy and now we want to get them out. I think that sometimes we keep them too long, and we just need to make sure we give them that little push and the skills to be able to

find information and continue learning so they can become lifelong learners without us right there to hold their hand all the time. So that's the direction that the Latino Adult Education Services Project is going. It's exciting. Some of the topics are fascinating, such as the role of women in the American society.

WEST: Oh, which is so different.

DORSEY: Very, very different. You know, when you have a situation where the wife is offered a job as supervisor, a promotion as supervisor, but in the evening. It's more money, money that they really can use, and the husband doesn't want her to work in the evening. "And you're going to have men working with you?" And it's a whole new concept. On the other hand, we also have to think: "How does he feel?" All of a sudden he's losing all of his power. He's losing control of the family. Now, what tools can we give this woman to be able to discuss things with her husband? What skills do we give her to not create a confrontation but to find the appropriate moment and the appropriate ways of massaging the information so she can talk [to] the husband in a positive manner into doing this? I don't know, hopefully it works. We have a lot of role-playing and a lot of cultural things like this. It's exciting. The people who have looked at them and the people who are in the process of field-testing it seem excited about it. So we'll see what the results are.

WEST: That's very interesting. Holda, this concludes the questions that I had. Is there anything that you would like to add?

DORSEY: No, I think that's it. I think I've talked a long time. [Laughter] I'm very honored with this, and I really thank you. Thank you very, very much, you and the committee.

WEST: Oh, well, thank you, Holda.

This interview was done as a part of the California Adult Education Oral History Project.

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Holda E. Dorsey
Professional Vita

EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

MA, University of Mexico, UNAM, 1962
BA, University of Mexico, UNAM, 1961
Service Credential, Administrative, Life, 1982.
School Supervision and Administration, Whittier College, 1973.
Standard Designated Subjects Credential, Adult Basic Education, Life, 1968.

MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

1995 - Present: Director, Latino Adult Education Services Project, California State Department of Education-Adult Education Division.
Responsibilities: Develop immigrant issues modules for orientation to our complex society; support demonstration projects promoting self directed learning; and provide technical assistance and training.

1993 - 1995: Manager, ESL Project, Hacienda La Puente Adult Education.
Responsibilities: Implement CDE ESL Model Standards; conduct curriculum design meetings to align course outlines to model standards; implement use of technology in the language laboratory; organize and implement placement procedure; design and coordinate 5% Innovative Project.

1991 - 1993: Manager, US/Mexico Adult Literacy Project, California State Department of Education-Adult Education Division.
Responsibilities: Coordinate meetings and activities of USA/Mexico Literacy Task Force; implement volunteer based Spanish Literacy program in 10 California sites; coordinate Binational meeting in Queretaro, Mexico; develop curriculum guide on immigrant assimilation; prepare and deliver presentations on project activities; prepare final reports.

1988-1993: Staff Development Manager, **OTAN** (Outreach & Technical Assistance Network)
California State Department of Education-Adult Education Division
Responsibilities: Manage eleven regional resource centers; organize staff development activities for 321 agencies; prepare needs assessments; schedule presenters and process stipends; prepare, print and mail information related to these activities; register participants; analyze activity evaluations and prepare quarterly reports.

1970-83: Coordinator, Adult Basic Education Department, Hacienda La Puente USD
Responsibilities: Managed a 1100 ADA ESL Program; interviewed, selected, trained, supervised and evaluated 35 full time certificated and 20 full time classified personnel; wrote annual proposal for federal funds; prepared publicity and recruitment campaigns; organized and chaired meetings with advisory committee members. Procured necessary instructional materials and equipment; conducted quarterly staff development activities; registered, tested, advised and placed students in appropriate levels of instruction.

Accomplishments:
Developed and/or supervised the following: ESL curricula based on life skills; model CBE demonstration sites; child care services for children of students; the first of its kind, basic skills class for deaf adults; basic education classes for incarcerated women at Sybil Brand Institute; Vocational ESL classes for Indochinese refugees; door to door recruitment program; TOEFL preparation classes for college bound students.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

1968-1970/1983-1988: Instructor, Adult Education, Hacienda La Puente USD,
Responsibilities: Instructed classes in Basic Skills, Spanish and ESL.

Accomplishments: Developed individualized instruction modules for Basic Skills classes; designed vocational ESL instruction for students in Janitorial and Dry Cleaning programs; designed special Spanish classes for the district bilingual aides and for the management personnel of a local carpet mill; designed a team teaching approach to CB-ESL which has been a model program in California; designed computerized record keeping system for student profile, pre-post test data, ethnic and language background.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

CBAE Regional Conference, East Los Angeles Region, Conference Coordinator, 1980-87: Met with regional adult education administrators; conducted needs assessment; identified staff development needs and established conference program priorities; managed program development including the selection of conference committee and local Abe program presenters; approved final program content; supervised conference site facilities; managed conference fees and presenters' stipends; analyzed conference evaluations and prepared final conference summary.

CBAE State Conference, Program Chair, ESL Strand, 1982-86: Read abstracts for conference presentations; coordinated training sessions with other program strands; selected and scheduled ESL presentations; contacted presenters by phone; and reviewed conference evaluations.

TESOL International Conference, New York City, Pre-Convention Workshop Chair, 1976: Read abstracts for 3-6-12 hour "institute level" workshops; selected workshops and made recommendations to international strand chairs for various instructional levels and area specialties; set up and organized workshop programs, contacted presenters by mail and telephone; coordinated the duplication of resource materials, acceptance letters and mailings to presenters; met with all presenters; coordinated the pre-registration of conference participants.

CCAE South Coast Section Regional Conference, Workshop Chair. 1973, 75, 78, 80, 83, 84, 85, 86, 90: Called for presentations through mailings and invitations; coordinated sessions at the conference; assigned and scheduled rooms.

CBAE State Conference, Sacramento, 1989, Conference Coordinator: Made hotel arrangements; prepared and mailed "Calls for Presentations"; prepared and monitored budget; coordinated meetings and all activities of conference chairs; prepared final program.

"Building Bridges" Second Annual Conference on Adults With Special Learning Needs, City of Industry, 1989, Conference Coordinator: Supervised and facilitated the activities of all conference committee chairs; prepared printed and mailed: Calls for Presentations, registration and preliminary program brochures, conference program; prepared contracts for speakers, vendors, and entertainment units; conducted meetings and prepared and disseminated minutes; organized overall program; prepared conference evaluation document.

Adult Literacy and Technology Conference, Costa Mesa, 1991, Conference Co Chair: Supervised and facilitated the activities of all conference committee chairs; prepared printed and mailed: Calls for Presentations, registration and preliminary program brochures, conference program, and conference proceedings; prepared contracts for speakers, vendors, and entertainment units; procured and scheduled equipment needed for presentations; conducted meetings and prepared and disseminated minutes; organized overall program; managed on site registration; prepared conference evaluation document.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

AAACE-Association of Adult & Alternative Education
ALT-Adult Literacy & Technology
CCAE-California Council of Adult Education-State President 1993-1994
CASAS-Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System Advisory Committee
CATESOL-California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
CBAE-Competency Based Adult Education Consortium
IILA-International Institute of Los Angeles-Board of Directors
TESOL-National Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

CALIFORNIA ADULT EDUCATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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PLACE West Covina
California

DATE September 29, 1995

Hilda A. Dorsey
(Interviewee)

Linda L. West
(Interviewer)
(for California Adult Education
Oral History Project)