

TIRF TODAY

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Promoting research and best practices to improve the use of English in the emerging global knowledge economy of the 21st century

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Giving Tuesday is Coming Soon — Please Help Us!

Editor's note: The first four paragraphs of this piece have been borrowed from the website GivingTuesday.org, though some segments have been paraphrased.

According to the following information from the [GivingTuesday website](http://GivingTuesday.org), Giving Tuesday is a global day of giving that pulls together the collective power of individuals, communities, and organizations to encourage philanthropy and to celebrate generosity worldwide. Occurring this year on Tuesday, December 1st, Giving Tuesday is held annually on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving (in the US), after the widely recognized shopping events, Black Friday and Cyber Monday, take place. Giving Tuesday helps to kick-off the holiday giving season and inspire people to collaborate in improving their local communities and to give back in substantial ways to the charities and causes they support.

92Y—a cultural center in New York City that, since 1874, has been bringing people together around its core values of community service and giving back—conceptualized Giving Tuesday as a new way of linking individuals and causes to strengthen communities and encourage giving. In 2014, the third year of the movement, Giving Tuesday brought together 30,000 partners in 68 countries and registered 32.7 million impressions on Twitter, with its hashtag mentioned 698,600 times.

"We have been incredibly inspired by the generosity in time, efforts, and ideas that have brought our concept for a worldwide movement into reality," said Henry Timms, founder of Giving Tuesday and Executive Director of 92Y. "As we embark on our fourth year of Giving Tuesday, we are encouraged by the early response from partners eager to continue making an impact in this global conversation."

TIRF's Reference List Offerings Expanded

As noted above, the end of each calendar year represents the season of giving thanks. The holiday of Thanksgiving in the US is a time for recognizing all that we appreciate in our lives. Whether we acknowledge the invaluable friendships we have with others, the amazing collegial support we have at work, or simply all the little things for which we grateful, this time of the year is certainly the season of demonstrating our gratitude for others.

In accordance with the season, we wish to recognize the wonderful support you give us annually through choosing to regularly receive *TIRF Today*. Our newsletter audience has grown steadily over the years, now with a reach of more than 7,000 people around the world each month.

To recognize your support of the Foundation, we are pleased to share with our readers the news that our reference lists have undergone major updates. In addition to many of our lists being expanded, we now have several new topics to share, including speaking in L2 contexts, advanced language learning, International English Language Testing System, overlapping speech, self-efficacy in language learning and teaching, and tutoring in language learning contexts. [Click](#)

Giving Tuesday is a movement to celebrate and provide incentives to give.



This effort harnesses the collective power of a unique blend of partners—nonprofits, businesses, and corporations as well as families and individuals—to transform how people think about, talk about, and participate in the giving season. Giving Tuesday inspires people to take collaborative action to improve their local communities, give back in better, smarter ways to the charities and causes they celebrate, and help create a better world. To learn more about Giving Tuesday participants and activities or to join the celebration of giving, please visit:

www.givingtuesday.org.

For TIRF to continue its operations and serve its wide-ranging constituencies, we need the help of all of our readers. Please keep in mind that our work has no boundaries: Our community includes people from all over the world. And because of this point, our fundraising efforts are constrained at times due to the challenges fundraisers face when there is no local community we can approach face-to-face and door-to-door. Thus, the need for your assistance is greater now than ever before.

So as the holiday season is soon beginning in many parts of the world, we ask our newsletter readers to consider supporting TIRF with a donation before the end of the year. There truly is no donation too small. Your gift, along with those from others who respond to our plea, will go a long way in helping ensure [TIRF's mission](#) makes a difference in our world for the year to come.

[here](#) to browse our reference lists.

There have been many contributors to our reference lists over the past several months. We would especially like to recognize the efforts of the following individuals: Ben Cagnan, Cameron Chien, Jodi Crandall, Yaqiong Cui, Anita Krishnan, Peter De Costa, Kelly Donovan, Amanda Liles, Nick Morales, Pablo Olivia, and Kimberly Woo. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude for all of these contributors for their efforts in improving TIRF's resources.

Hala Sun, a PhD student at the University of California, Santa Barbara, recently wrote to us saying that she wished to thank TIRF for "the continuous updates on reference lists, awards, and publication opportunities." She added that the TIRF website is "the first place I go to as I'm compiling my reading list to prepare for my qualifying exams. I have shared this site with many of my colleagues and I remember how they repeatedly asked me, 'Is this really free?'"

There certainly are no charges for using our resources. However, to continue with the theme of this newsletter, we could really use your financial support to continue to offer the many resources we have on TIRF's website.

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Kathleen Bailey,
Chair of TIRF

Chair's Report—Sgt. Jones, the Ragged Man, and Giving Tuesday

Sometimes when I'm worried about something and can't sleep, I get up early and go to a local diner for breakfast. It's generally quiet there, so I can sit and drink coffee for a few hours while I grade papers, draft letters of recommendation, or edit manuscripts.

About a year ago at this time, I was in that stressed-out, sleepless state, trying to finish marking my students' papers before my 8 A.M. class. I suddenly realized that I'd lost track of time and my morning class was about to begin. I gathered up my things and rushed to the cash register, where my waitress informed me that she couldn't close my check because her shift was over and the manager had to change the cash register records. And, she added, the manager was on an important telephone call and it would be just a few minutes before he would be able to change the register. Of course, this news did not make me very happy in my already anxious mood. I stood there fidgeting and thinking aggravated thoughts, when suddenly a soft voice behind me said, "Ma'am, let me buy your breakfast for you."

I turned and saw a young man in a soldiers' uniform, waiting in line behind me. The name patch on his uniform said "SGT. JONES"

"Oh, you don't have to do that," I said, somewhat taken aback. "I have the money."

"I understand," he said, "but you look like you don't have the time."

Again, I was taken aback. Was I that obvious? Was I scattering impatient vibes out into the universe? Apparently so, and Sgt. Jones had clearly read my nonverbal signals correctly.

I took a deep breath and then another, willing myself to be calm and let go of all the negativity I was feeling. A total stranger had just responded to my stress with kindness and empathy.

I stuck out my hand and introduced myself. I asked Sgt. Jones if he was studying at the Defense Language Institute—a large military post here in Monterey that provides language instruction for members of the US armed services. He said yes, and that his class would soon have their final proficiency tests. These assessments are extremely important examinations that often influence the soldiers' future careers. What was I stressing about anyway? I

asked Sgt. Jones how his studying was going and he grinned and said he liked studying language, but the listening tests were very difficult for him.

At that point the restaurant manager asked me for my check and my credit card. I had been so engaged in the conversation with Sgt. Jones that I didn't realize the cash register updating had taken place. Once again, Sgt. Jones said he'd be happy to buy my breakfast, but I thanked him, wished him luck on his exams, and hurried off to my class. I kept thinking about Sgt. Jones though—how he had read my anxiety and quietly tried to help.

After class, I told Ryan (TIRF's Executive Assistant) about my encounter with Sgt. Jones and how it had affected me. As a result of meeting Sgt. Jones, I decided I'd try to do something kind for a stranger every day for the rest of the 2014 calendar year.

Fast forward to the end of 2015. There I was again, sitting at the same diner, frantically grading students' papers. Although it never gets really cold in Monterey, the weather had definitely changed to our Central California version of winter. While I was sitting in the warm restaurant, glad to be drinking hot coffee, a man came into the diner with a guitar slung across his back. That's why I noticed him in particular; there was a time in my life when I earned my living by singing and playing guitar in bars and restaurants. It's not an easy life, but this man looked like he was having a rougher time than I'd ever had. His clothes were ragged, the

sleeves of his jacket frayed, and the cuffs of his jeans worn. He spoke to the waitress, and she replied briefly before going into the back office. I wondered if the man had placed a to-go order, or if he was asking for left-overs. The waitress came back out and spoke to him, shaking her head. He nodded, and I had the impression he was thanking her, but then he turned and left the diner.

I was very puzzled, so I called to the waitress and asked her if the ragged man had wanted breakfast. "Oh, no," she said. "He just wanted to come in and sit down for a while so he could get warm. But the manager said people can't be in here unless they

order food."

All he wanted was to get warm. What was I stressing about? Suddenly, Sgt. Jones and his quiet offer to buy me breakfast flashed into my mind. I asked the waitress to please see if she could call to the man with the guitar and tell him that a customer wanted to buy him breakfast. She ran out of the restaurant and caught up with him in the parking lot. I watched through the window as she talked with him, gesturing to the diner, and then preceded him through the door.

The ragged man sat down at a booth, rubbing his hands together. When the waitress brought him a cup of coffee, he held it lovingly in both hands for a moment and inhaled the steam rising from the cup.

The image of his face, his eyes closed and his smile widening, touched me deeply. I called the waitress over and asked her to tell him he could have anything he wanted – including a to-go order if he wanted to take lunch with him. I finished grading the last student's paper, and prepared to leave. As I was gathering my things, the ragged man came to my table and thanked me for breakfast. As we shook hands I thought, "This one's for you, Sgt. Jones."

As highlighted on the front page of *TIRF Today*, Tuesday, December 1st is "Giving Tuesday." This year, I am particularly thankful for the many blessings in my life—both in the past and present. I will always remember not only the kindness Sgt. Jones showed me on that gloomy day last year, but also the lesson he taught me about getting beyond my own worries and treating others with empathy and generosity.

It is my hope that on Giving Tuesday, you will consider supporting TIRF with a donation. As I learned from Sgt. Jones, even the smallest gifts can make a profound impact on the lives of others. And there is no doubt in my mind that your gift will have the kind of effect on our constituents' lives around the world that Sgt. Jones' had on mine, and subsequently on the ragged man's. Please visit [TIRF's website](http://www.tirfonline.org) to support our mission and those people's lives we influence.



Kathi Bailey