

Happy spring to everyone!

Last semester, one of my students wrote in one of her assignments, "Because the coffee shop is in order to use students, cost must not be expensive." Well, and why not? Coffee shops use customers just as customers use coffee shops. Mutual benefit. I'm sure this 'creative' use of language was not intentional (or logical), but it reminded me that native speakers often play with language. Formulaic expressions are sometimes changed spontaneously to make them fit the particular context at the time of utterance.

Recently, I felt like I was coming down with a cold, but I didn't feel like I was catching a cold; it felt like a cold was trying to catch me. After all, who wants to catch a cold? Unfortunately, it finally did catch me.

Song lyrics of some American roots music, such as blues music and country music, are rife with examples of songwriters playing with words and phrases in creative, clever ways. In both genres, cheating songs are common. 'Cheating' means having a love affair with someone other than your spouse.

In blues music, for example, 'another mule kicking in your stall' from the 1951 Muddy Waters recording, *Long Distance Call*, is a euphemism for cheating on your spouse that reflects its origin in rural agricultural communities of the southern United States,

where blues music was born. A mule is a farm animal similar to a horse, and a stall is the place in the barn where the mule sleeps. Do you get the picture?

Sometimes spring weather can be unpredictable, so take care not to let a cold catch you, and watch out for stray mules.

I look forward to hearing from you through your contributions to the newsletter.

Thanks very much.

Sybil Armstrong



IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the Newsletter Editor	1
SIG News and Business	2
Conference Report	3
Pan-SIG Conference	6
Conference Watch	8
People Watch	9
Journal Watch	12
Book Watch	14

Pragmatic Matters

Subscriptions

JALT Members:	1500 yen
	(subscription includes SIG membership)
Non JALT members:	2500 yen
	(subscription only)