

## **TexTESOL III Raises Its Voice!**

### **TexTESOL III Newsletter from March/April 1998**

#### **Crazy for Conferences**

Even though I haven't gone through all my handouts and typed all my notes like I promised I would, I thoroughly enjoyed the State, Regional, and National/International Conferences.

#### **State Conference in Austin**

Even though the conference was highlighted in our last newsletter, I just want to say that the whole event was a very positive experience for me. First of all, I worked with the best group of people imaginable. I also loved being involved in the planning process; this was a first for me, and it was such a great learning experience. And believe it or not-the Board is already making plans for the State Conference in the year 2001! We're putting together a notebook documenting every aspect of the past state conference. So we'll be ready in a few short years to put on an even bigger and better conference. Any suggestions and comments you have will be welcome.

#### **Regional Spring Conference in Austin**



What a treat! For those of us who attended, we were all jazzed and motivated by what Cinthia Salinas had to say-or rather-what we all had to say since Cinthia got us all immediately involved. Cinthia set up the discussion by having us brainstorm in small groups about the multiple hats-all large and distinctive-that we wear as ESL educators. We have accepted a huge responsibility to serve our varied student populations, a responsibility that goes well beyond teaching them grammar and communicative skills. Parents expect us to not only teach their children but often to provide them with life-saving information about drugs, AIDS, and personal safety issues. Starting in the fall of '98, the administration will require that all teachers, including ESL instructors, to implement TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) standards. I think what really hit home was when Cinthia informed us that past and current legislature did not and does not involve input from teachers, despite the fact that we're the real experts in the field. The main focus of her presentation was to create an awareness that we, as educators, need to take a more active role in shaping political decisions that will affect us all.

After the workshop ended, we all enjoyed a nice luncheon "spread" while we

visited and picked up lesson plans and activities from the Shop & Shop table. Several lucky raffle winners left with either a \$50 gift certificate to buy educational supplies and a voucher to be used at the upcoming TESOL Academy to be held in San Antonio in July.

### **TESOL '98 in Seattle**

I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. The conference was as exciting and diverse as I had expected. I congratulated myself on getting up early enough to attend a couple of 7:30 AM sessions, only to discover that the rooms were packed. Even though there was often standing-and-squatting-room-only, people seemed to enjoy the workshops, presentations, and panel discussions. Whenever I had reached my learning-capacity limit, I enjoyed strong Seattle coffee to help my mind re-group. And since fish is supposed to be brain food, I forced myself to eat salmon every evening-all in the name of learning. Not a bad way to spend Spring Break...

*Susan Murphy*  
*TexTESOL III President*

### **Help with TEKS**

In August 1998 the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) will go into effect in Texas public schools. For information about the reading and language arts TEKS and tips on how to implement them in your classroom, contact:

Your Regional Service Center

*Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts*  
*SZB 406 UT-Austin*  
*Austin, TX 78712*  
*(512) 232-2320*

*Curriculum and Professional Development*  
*Texas Education Agency*  
*1701 N. Congress Avenue*  
*Austin, TX 78701-1494*  
*(512) 463-9581*

The following websites:  
<http://www.tenet.edu/teks>  
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks>

## **Wake Up and Smell the Coffee and Write Your Representatives in Congress!**

*by John R. Schmidt, Texas Intensive English Program, Austin, Texas*

TESOL 1998 Convention earlybirds had an opportunity to start their days in Seattle at Breakfast Seminars, which combined a continental breakfast with an informative session on a topic relevant to TESOLers. Dr. Adelaide Parsons of Southwest Missouri State University very capably orchestrated the 23 early-morning seminars conducted over four days of the TESOL Convention. I had the opportunity to coordinate and chair a lively breakfast seminar featuring Drs. Janet and Milton Bennett from the Intercultural Communication Institute, entitled, "Developing Intercultural Competency".

Following conferees' trips to the breakfast buffet and informal discussions among the TESOL early risers, the Bennetts provided considerable food for thought in their discussion of Milton's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, ranging from the ethnocentric to ethnorelative poles of the model's spectrum, covering the following six stages: denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration.

The same afternoon the Bennetts presented at TESOL a complementary paper, "Teaching Intercultural Competence," in which they presented a rationale for incorporating culture-general competencies into the language curriculum to prepare language learners to communicate across cultures. An audio recording of this presentation and over 140 other ones conducted at the 1998 TESOL Convention are available from

*Audio Transcripts, Ltd. at 3660-B Wheeler Avenue; Alexandria, VA 22304  
(tel. 703-370-8273; fax 703-370-5162; e-mail [atltapes@aol.com](mailto:atltapes@aol.com))*

For an intensive and invigorating training course in intercultural communication, I heartily and enthusiastically recommend the Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication (SIIC), co-directed by Janet and Milton Bennett. Conducted during the second half of July in the Portland, Oregon area, the institute offers 41 different workshops, each ranging from three to five days in duration. A first-timer at SIIC in 1997, I enrolled in the survey course, Foundations of Intercultural Communication. For more information on SIIC, which is extremely relevant to one of TESOL's newest interest sections, Intercultural Communication, call 503-297-4622, fax 503-297-4695, e-mail [ici@intercultural.org](mailto:ici@intercultural.org) or write:

*SIIC at 8835 SW Canyon Lane, Suite 238; Portland, OR 97225.*

Textesolers are very fortunate that Milton Bennett will be the keynote speaker at the 1998 TEXTESOL State Convention in Arlington this November.

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In the exhibit area of the 1998 TESOL Convention in Seattle, the TESOL Central Office featured an advocacy booth, which had information on current issues related to TESOL, as well as information on other advocacy and sociopolitical activities of TESOL. The main feature of the booth was the letter-writing campaign to the U.S. Congress. To prepare for the campaign, TESOL learned which issues are most timely from its legislative consultant who drafted a sample letter, along with a brief description of the issue at hand. At the booth John Segota, Project Coordinator from the TESOL Central Office, provided forms for TESOLers to complete with their names, members of Congress, and comments on the issue. John Segota expediently incorporated the personal comments into a computerized boilerplate of the letter, while the letterwriters addressed the envelopes provided by TESOL. In minutes he printed out letters to both of the letterwriters' U.S. senators and their U.S. representative and offered to stamp and post the letters.

This year one of TESOL's letters urged members of Congress to support the President's proposed budget, which generously funded bilingual teacher training, adult ESL education, and the Hispanic Agenda. The second letter was for members of the House, urging them to defeat the proposed amendment of Rep. Frank Riggs (CA) to the Higher Education Act which would prohibit schools that use affirmative action guidelines in their admissions processes from using federal financial aid.

Having participated in this valuable civic letterwriting campaign at the TESOL Convention, I was pleased to receive a written reply within a few weeks from U.S. Senator Lloyd Doggett, in which he confirmed his agreement with my position on these issues. He added, "My wife Libby worked for several years as a bilingual educator in Austin. Based on both her experiences as a teacher and my own experiences growing up and living in Texas all my life, I am convinced that preserving native languages and learning English, through education and other means, are powerful tools in building and strengthening community...I will seek opportunities to address your concerns as the appropriations debate continues." (To date I have not received a reply from either Texas senator.)

Others from the TEXTESOL III Board are familiar with the impressive and significant Congressional letter-writing campaign that John Segota ably facilitated on site at the TESOL Convention. At our most recent affiliate board meeting, it was agreed upon that TEXTESOL III would strongly encourage

TEXTESOL V, the host affiliate of the 1998 TEXTESOL State Convention, that Mr. Segota be invited to the November convention to provide a similar service for TEXTESOLers from around the state to voice their opinions in mass to the U.S. Congress regarding current issues that are critical to both our profession and to the populations that we serve.

For further information and input regarding TESOL's legislative initiatives, contact

*John Segota, Program Coordinator, TESOL Central Office, 1600 Cameron St., Suite 300 Alexandria, VA 22314-2751; Tel. 703-518-2513; Fax 703-836-6447; e-mail [john@tesol.edu](mailto:john@tesol.edu) or on the web at <http://www.tesol.edu>*

### **Anecdote Corner**

Teacher: Give me a sentence with the word I in it.

Student: I is . . .

Teacher: No, no, no! You must say 'I am'.

Student: Okay. I am the ninth letter of the alphabet.

### **Classifieds**

**SEEKING:** Heinle & Heinle Publishers seeks an established independent commissioned sales representative to carry selected ESL product to the Adult Education market, for programs funded through local Boards of Education. Please contact John McHugh at 800-237-0053 ext. 8165 for details.

**POSITIONS:** Austin Community College has the following ESL paid opportunities: ESL Teachers at \$15.00-18.00/hr.; Teaching Assistants at \$8.69/hr. Volunteer and internship positions also available. All positions are part-time. For more information please contact:

*Marianne Dryden, Interim Refugee ESL Coordinator, Austin Community College, 5930 Middle Fiskville Road, Austin, TX 78752*

or call 517-6770.

Please send resumes for paid positions.

**NEEDED:** Substitute teachers for subjects and part-time Spanish teachers needed by MSD. Contact Michael Hydak at 414-4212 for more information.

## **Fellowships**

Educational Testing Service has announced the annual TOEFL Doctoral Dissertation Research Award of \$1,500 for doctoral dissertation research that makes a significant and original contribution to knowledge about and/or the use and development of second/foreign languages tests and testing. Deadline for the fellowship is **May 15, 1998**.

The research must have been completed as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree, or its equivalent, at a university within or outside the United States. Although the dissertation submitted for award consideration must be in English, the research may be related to the second/foreign language testing of any language. For more information visit the TOEFL website at: <http://www.toefl.org/raward.html>

## **Books on Review**

### **Talk It Up and Talk It Over: Oral Communication for the Real World**

*by Joann Rishel Kozyrev (University of California, Santa Barbara) Published by Houghton Mifflin Company*

Reviewed by Harriet Hoffman  
Instructor, Texas Intensive English Program Austin, Texas

Talk It Up and Talk It Over is a two-part series aimed at intermediate and advanced ESL learners. Each book includes listening, speaking, and pronunciation activities. The books' stated goal is to allow students to work on both accuracy and fluency.

In both books, each chapter is organized around a topic. The Introduction to each chapter focuses on speaking fluency, allowing students to talk personally about each topic and make predictions about what they will listen to. Each chapter then has two or three listening activities related to the chapter topic, and one pronunciation section with several different activities. Interspersed throughout the chapter are various other speaking activities.

Talk It Up is the first book of the series. It begins with an Introduction to the Students explaining some of the basics of pronunciation and includes consonant and vowel charts. Next is a Fluency and Pronunciation Pre-Test that students can take to evaluate themselves and chose problem areas to focus on. In these tests, students look at a picture, record a one minute description, then

listen and score themselves for fluency. Students then record themselves reading a passage that has been provided. Each student listens with the teacher and chooses one or two pronunciation problems to focus on. At the end of every two chapters, students test themselves again. A chart provided at the front of the book enables students to record how they did on each test, and to note both progress and problem areas.

The unit topics in this book are: Friends, Feeling at Home, Making Connections, The World of Work, School Choices/Life Opportunities, Money Matters, Help, and Consumer Decisions. Each chapter has three listening passages related to the topic with exercises to practice both listening for main ideas and for details. Speaking activities include group discussions, interviewing classmates, role plays, and interviewing a guest speaker. The pronunciation sections begin with some introductory material such as strategies for improving pronunciation, symbols for sounds, syllables, and unstressed syllables. Most of the pronunciation activities focus on specific vowel and consonant sounds. The sounds are presented first in a list of words, then a list of sentences. Then students practice in pairs, saying and recognizing the sound in sentences.

Talk It Over is the second book in the series. It continues the practice of student self-evaluation, but in a different form. At the end of each chapter, students fill out a chart about notetaking, speaking, and pronunciation. The students write comments about himself, and the teacher adds comments.

In general, the listening passages in this book are more appropriate for the stated target audience than the first book. The two passages on the demo tape were longer and presented more complex ideas. The speakers spoke rapidly and naturally, but quite clearly.

The Unit topics are, as in the first book, topics of general interest: Living in Two Cultures, Entertainment, Environmental Activism, The Sounds of Language, Biotechnology, Making it Work, Alternative Medicine, and Television. However, the activities to go along with them are of a somewhat more academic nature. For The Introduction there are such activities as: reading a chart, reading a passage related to the topic, or learning a necessary list of idioms or vocabulary. Each chapter includes two listening passages and a different method of notetaking. Speaking activities include group discussions based on a reading, interviewing classmates, strategies for answering and asking questions, role plays, small group presentations, persuasive speaking, and formal presentations with fact and opinion.

The pronunciation sections of this book are also quite different from the first book. Some of the topics covered are intonation, syllable stress, rhythm and sentence stress, and thought groups.

In general, the books do a good job of integrating listening, speaking, and pronunciation practice. However, they do not seem to be aimed at the same audience. Talk It Up, the first book, presents listening passages that are too easy for the targeted group of intermediate to advanced learners. The passages are very short, with simple language about daily topics such as a friend who is late for an appointment, or calling the fire department. The activities are communicative and do not have an academic emphasis. As already stated, Talk It Over seems more appropriate for the targeted level and is somewhat academic in its approach, although there is also plenty of communicative practice. Perhaps these two books should not be marketed as a series, but as separate books with different audiences.

### **CONGRESS CONTEMPLATES PARTIAL RESCISSION OF TITLE VII FUNDS**

On Tuesday, March 30, the House of Representatives passed the 1998 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Bill (H.R. 3579) by a margin of 212 to 208. The primary purpose of the bill is to provide funding for emergency expenses resulting from recent floods and other natural disasters. To pay for the emergency appropriations, the House version of the bill proposes to rescind funds from various other federal programs, including a \$75 million rescission from Bilingual Education. The Senate version of the the bill, which passed on March 31, does not propose any rescissions for education programs. A conference will be scheduled to reconcile the differences in the House and Senate versions of the bill after Congress reconvenes from recess on April 21, 1998. You can access the full text of this bill or track its status through the Library of Congress Legislative Information site at: <http://thomas.loc.gov/> H.R. 3579's website can be found at: <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d105:h.r.03579> For more information regarding issues pertaining to bilingual education, visit the National Clearinghouse of Bilingual Education's webpage at: <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu> For the information on the rescission of Title VII visit their webpage at: <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/majordomo/newsline/1998/march/news0330.html>