

## FALL NEWSLETTER

TexTESOL III Newsletter for June/July 1999

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

TexTESOL III Fall 1999 Conference

#### *Call for Contributions*

If you would like to contribute an article to this newsletter, please contact the newsletter editor, Rebecca Herman, at [rherman@del-valle.k12.tx.us](mailto:rherman@del-valle.k12.tx.us). Please send your contributions by e-mail as a text-only document of up to 500 words. If this is not possible, you may send a hard copy to the TexTESOL III office:

*Newsletter Editor  
TexTESOL III, Dexter Hall  
1103 West 24th Street  
Austin, TX 78705*

You may contribute to any section, including book reviews, research, teaching tips, literature reviews, job announcements, and the calendar. If you would like to volunteer to read books and review them for our newsletter, please contact the editor at the above e-mail address. Our newsletter is published at least four times a year.

If you would like to volunteer to read books and review them for our newsletter, please contact the editor at the above e-mail address. If you would like to contribute a book that you think should be reviewed for publication, you may donate (not loan) a book to be reviewed to the above mailing address, along with your recommendation that it be reviewed for this newsletter.

## **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

*by Susan Murphy*

I'LL START OFF by congratulating the winners of the Excellence in Teaching awards. Vicki Almour (East Ward Elementary, Killeen), Rosalia Cruz (Travis High School, Austin), Mike Smith (ESL Services, UT Austin), and Greg Thompson (Adult Education Program, Austin Community College) were acknowledged for their devotion to and excellence in the field of ESL teaching at the first TextESOL III Spring Awards Banquet held on Saturday, April 24, at the Doubletree Hotel in Austin.

Those who came to congratulate the winners and enjoy the company of fellow ESL teachers and administrators were not only treated to a beautiful setting, a plentiful buffet, and live piano music, but also to an inspiring and entertaining speech given by the guest speaker, Dr. Elaine Horwitz, Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction and Director of the Foreign Language Program at the University of Texas at Austin.

The honored guests were not the only winners. Quite a few lucky raffle winners left with potted plants and packages of teaching material donated by Pearson Education. Based on the responses at the banquet and feedback that board members received afterward, I think it's safe to say that TextESOL III's first event to acknowledge excellence in ESL teaching was a great success! Included in this issue are profiles of the four

award recipients, highlights of Dr. Horwitz's speech, and pictures taken at the banquet.

MORE FUN WAS HAD at the May 6 Happy Hour held at Central Market in central Austin. It was nice to see "old" faces and welcome new ones as well. Teachers from Dexter (TIEP), ESL Services (UT), Austin ISD, and IELS Language School were there to talk a little shop and enjoy chips, salsa, and cold drinks.

IN JUST A FEW MONTHS, TexTESOL III will be sponsoring the Fall Regional Conference on September 25 at St. Edwards University. We're very excited to be hosting it at a new venue: the Ragsdale Conference Center on the campus of St. Ed's. It was just completed last month, and the facility is really beautiful and spacious.

Dr. Jean Zukowsky-Faust will be our featured speaker at our fall conference. Jean has been a workshop presenter and trainer of teachers in elementary, secondary and university ESL programs for many years. I want to encourage anyone who would like to present at this conference to submit your proposal as soon as possible. The deadline for proposals is not until July 31, but, as you know, summers go by quickly. There is a Call for Presenters form included in this issue as well as a pre-registration form to attend the conference. It's important to note that only those who have pre-registered will be eligible for the catered lunch!

I hope all of you are having a relaxing and/or productive summer.

## **Awards Brunch**

### **TexTESOL III Celebrates Excellence in Teaching**

*By Rebecca Herman*

On April 24, 1999, TexTESOL III honored those ESL teachers who were chosen by board members as most worthy in their category. Teachers from Regions XII, XIII, and XV were eligible to apply. This was our first annual awards ceremony and was designed to honor teachers from various teaching categories within the ESL field.

Our celebration began as a delicious brunch at the Doubletree Hotel in Austin. ESL materials were on display by Matthew Lemke from the Pearson Education Group, and Caty Sung provided background piano music.

Our guest speaker for this special event was Dr. Elaine Horwitz, from the University of Texas at Austin. Her talk was about "connecting with students." Dr. Horwitz said that the most important thing she wanted her students to say about her, as a language teacher, was that they wanted to talk with her. In that way scaffolding would be encouraged, conversation would be encouraged, discussions about the nature of language learning would emerge, and anxiety would be reduced. Her message,

substantiated with experience, research and personal anecdote, was truly universal.

Various TexTESOL III board members introduced the award winners, each of whom gave a much more elaborate and glowing description of the talents and personal attributes of each winner that can be provided here. However, a brief profile of each participant is provided below.

We hope that this award will serve to make more teachers aware of their eligibility for this award each year from now on. We are still discovering new ways to reach out to all ESL teachers throughout our region to become actively involved in the continuing dialog on ESL issues, and one way we can best do that is through regular contact, both in writing and through personal networking. Let's all try to spread the word!

### **Winners, 1999 TexTESOL III Excellence in Teaching Awards**

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL AWARD:** Vicki Almour is an ESL teacher at East Ward Elementary School in Killeen. She teaches in a full inclusion setting, and handles staff development and parent training for the district.

**SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL AWARD:** Rosalia Cruz is a bilingual and ESL teacher at Travis High School in

Austin. She has developed a Translating Strand for students, which enables students to become translators at many business and government offices. She has obtained grant money to provide a language lab for students and parents in south Austin and is active in several youth organizations both at school and in the community.

**INTENSIVE ENGLISH COLLEGE LEVEL AWARD:**

Michael T. Smith is an instructor in ESL Services at the University of Texas at Austin. In addition to spending countless hours helping current and former student, Mike has been busy setting up the ESL Services Computer Lab, training teachers in computer use, and pursuing a Ph.D. in Foreign Language Education.

**ADULT EDUCATION LEVEL AWARD:** Gregory

Thompson is an ESL teacher in the Adult Education Program at Austin Community College. He has created a televised series called "At Home With English" with grant monies, and was writer, director and actor in the series. Mr. Thompson specializes in studying the grammars of many different languages and creating materials for learners of all proficiency levels.

**TexTESOL III Fall 1999 Regional Conference**

**FOCUS ON THE FUTURE**

Saturday, September 25, 1999

10:00 am - 4:00 pm (Registration, coffee & exhibits begin at 9:15 am)

Ragsdale Conference Center, St. Edward's University,  
Austin, Texas

**Featured Keynote Speaker:**

Dr. Jean Zukowsky-Faust  
Professor of Applied Linguistics, Northern Arizona  
University Come to the conference and enjoy:

- Workshops and presentations for everyone! (K-12, Adult, Intensive, etc.)
- Meeting and "talking shop" with your ESL colleagues
- Exhibitors' hall - see the latest in ESL materials!
- Catered lunch
- The Ragsdale Conference Center - St. Edward's beautiful NEW facility!
- Raffle - fun and fabulous prizes!

Pre-registration deadline is September 10, 1999.

<b>FEES</b>	<b>PRE- REGISTRATION</b>	<b>ON-SITE REGISTRATION</b>
Student Members	\$12	\$16

Members	\$16	\$20
Student Non- members	\$16	\$20
Non- members	\$20	\$24

### **CLASSIFIEDS**

#### **RECRUITING: TESOL Instructors in Seoul, Korea**

Our Ivy International Group is an institution where trained teachers are teaching English at college level in Korea. We are starting a new program, TESOL, to teach English for all levels.

Required: M.A. in TESOL; experience preferred.

#### Compensation:

1. Travel expenses (round trip tickets)
2. Housing
3. Medical Insurance
4. Two weeks paid vacation
5. Salary: \$2,000 - 2,500/month



Contact: Ms. Margaret Han, Director of Academic Affairs  
FAX: 82-2-2269-5114  
PHONE: 82-2-2268-5147  
E-mail: [ivygeige@thruset.com](mailto:ivygeige@thruset.com)

**POSITIONS:**

Austin Community College has the following ESL volunteer and voluntary internship positions available: ESL volunteers to help refugees from Bosnia, Vietnam, Cuba and Africa to get a job. Even one hour of your time would greatly help. Also available are voluntary teaching and teaching assistant training positions. Contact Marianne Dryden, Interim Refugee ESL Coordinator, Austin Community College, 5930 Middle Fiskville Road, Austin, Texas 78752 or call (512) 517-6770.

**NEEDED:**

Substitute teachers for all subjects, and part-time Latin and Spanish teachers needed by Austin ISD. For applications for substitute teaching and teaching applications, call Personnel, Austin ISD: (512) 414-1721. Call Michael Hydak at (512) 414-4212 for more information.

## **ELI's Silver Anniversary**

*By Leanne South  
College of Liberal Arts  
Texas A&M, College Station*

The English Language Institute (ELI) at Texas A&M University will celebrate its silver anniversary Oct. 22, 1999, at the Presidential Conference Center on the Texas A&M campus in College Station. The theme for the event is "Connecting the World Through Language and Culture."

"Our intent is to make our 25th anniversary celebration a social and an educational event," said Jane Hughey, director of the institute.

An ELI former student reunion will begin at 9:30 a.m. in the Bush Presidential Library. English language instructors from throughout the Central Texas region are invited to participate in a day-long series of seminars focusing on international issues. The sessions are free and topics will cover international agriculture, international culture, engineering, physics, architecture and international programs. Seminar leaders include Nobel Prize winner Norman Borlaug and F. Albert Cotton, distinguished professor of chemistry.

At noon everyone will be treated to a chuck wagon-style barbecue luncheon. Tickets for the luncheon will run \$15

per plate. The capstone event will be an evening banquet, held in the same room in the conference center where many former students have been honored. It is also the same room where many former students celebrated their first American Thanksgiving. Tickets for the dinner are \$30 each.

Located in the College of Liberal Arts, The English Language Institute offers a comprehensive, innovative program designed for international students who want to improve their English language skills. Full-time ELI students spend 24 hours per week in English-as-a-second language courses such as grammar, composition, oral skills, reading, vocabulary, listening and directed lab. Begun as a year-round program at Texas A&M in 1974, ELI has grown from a small program instructing 100 students annually to one that provides intensive English instruction to more than 500 students each year.

For more information about the ELI silver anniversary celebration, call the ELI office at (409) 845-7936.

### **On-line News**

#### **A New Online Newsletter: Language Link**

*By Kathleen M. Marcos  
Language Link Editor*

*ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics*

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics is pleased to announce the publication of **Language Link**, a quarterly online newsletter.

Each issue of Language Link will focus on a specific theme related to foreign language education, English as a second language, bilingual education, or linguistics. Profiles of relevant books, journals, and recent ERIC documents will follow a feature article on the theme. Each issue will also feature news from ERIC partners and the ERIC system, as well as information about upcoming conferences and links to organizations and publishers.

The first issue, scheduled for publication in June 1999, will focus on language policy and reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

To subscribe to Language Link, send a message to: [langlink-on@mail-list.cal.org](mailto:langlink-on@mail-list.cal.org) Please leave the subject and message fields blank.

You will then receive a welcome letter along with subscription option information. If you have any questions about Language Link or if you would like to contribute news about your organization, please send a message to [linkeditor@cal.org](mailto:linkeditor@cal.org).

Other services offered by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics (ERIC/CLL) include a popular

question-answering service; a Web site that includes FAQs, resource guides, and information digests on topics in language education; a semiannual print newsletter; and directories, monographs, and other publications. ERIC/CLL is operated by the Center for Applied Linguistics with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Library of Education.

### **Language Assessment**

*by Rebecca Herman*

In May 2000, a new federally-funded project will begin to generate an assessment framework for foreign language proficiency in American high school students. The first such national project ever in foreign language education, this three-year project will collect data from high school students in Spanish, with other smaller-scale studies in French, German, Japanese, or in other grades. ESL teachers should take note of the issues being addressed, because ESL students will inevitably be under scrutiny in the future as well. ESL teachers need to become alert to issues that are typically examined in the area of language learning so we can begin our own dialog before national assessment in ESL transpires.

One reason such a national project is being launched is because the National Assessment Governing Board is required by law to regularly measure achievement in a

cross-section of students in U.S. elementary and secondary schools. In addition, the 1994 National Education Goals require assessment in a range of academic subjects, including foreign languages.

Interestingly, the number of students taking a foreign language has risen from 50 percent in 1982 to about three-quarters of all high school students as of 1994. Today about 27 percent take a third year level course and 10 percent reach fourth-year.

The specifications for the assessment framework are being submitted to the 26-member National Assessment Governing Board. Contributors will include the Center for Applied Linguistics of Washington, D. (CAL), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), and the American Institutes for Research (AIR). Additional input will be received from parent and student focus groups, open forums for foreign language teachers in five cities across the country, and opportunities for comment from members of the public, business, scholarly and education groups, and government language training agencies. **Some interesting issues to be addressed include:**

- Should a sample of 12th graders be tested, or should only students currently studying a language be assessed?
- Should the level of language course (1st year, 2nd year, etc.) be influenced by which grade the student is in school (9th grade, 10th grade, etc.)?
- If some students learn Spanish at home rather than as

a foreign language at school, how should their data be included?

- Which other languages should be chosen for the smaller-scale studies?
- How closely should this new assessment follow the national standards in foreign language education issued by professional groups in 1996?
- Should the newly defined achievement levels match current ACTFL proficiency guidelines?

**These issues may be just as relevant for teachers of English as a Second Language (TESL). For example:**

- Should we stop testing for English proficiency as soon as students are exited from the ESL program? Even though we monitor student progress to two years after the students are exited, we never assess their retention much less their progress in English; we merely track whether students are passing in other mainstream subjects and whether they pass the standardized achievement tests (TAAS).
- Should we assess our ESL high school students based on grade level, regardless of length of residence or other factors such as personal history that may influence adjustment curves?
- How should we assess ESL students who are learning English at home, such as when one of the parents speaks only English? Should they be compared with students without English in the home?
- Should native language be considered in assessing progress in certain skills? If transfer issues were

addressed, would the assessment instrument become unwieldy?

- How closely should ESL assessment match TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) standards? Texas teachers need to take this issue seriously, since the only legitimate exit procedure is for students to take and pass the TAAS. Since each year students may take a different set of TAAS tests, should English be assessed only in those TAAS subjects (for national assessment purposes)?
- Should ESL achievement levels be created to match TAAS proficiency guidelines? At present ESL levels are bottom heavy, meaning that students either "pass" the ESL test in a given skill, or are assigned a level indicating how much below passing level they are. On the other hand, TAAS equivalency scores (Texas Learning Index/TLI) have a range of up to 100, with a passing TLI of 70.

Sooner or later, national organizations will move to assess ESL students. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has already assessed eight subjects since 1989, and foreign language is next. It is important that we create our own dialog of matching issues in ESL before we face our own three-year deadline.

### **"A Few Random Thoughts"**

If lawyers are disbarred and clergymen defrocked,



doesn't it follow that electricians can be delighted,  
musicians denoted, cowboys deranged, models deposed,  
tree surgeons debarked and dry cleaners depressed?  
When cheese gets its picture taken, what does it say?  
Why are a wise man and a wise guy opposites?  
Why do overlook and oversee mean opposite things?  
If horrific means to make horrible, does terrific mean to  
make terrible?  
Why isn't 11 pronounced onety one?  
Do infants enjoy infancy as much as adults enjoy  
adultery?  
If a pig loses its voice, is it disgruntled?  
Why do women wear evening gowns to nightclubs?  
Shouldn't they be wearing nightgowns?  
When someone asks you, "A penny for your thoughts,"  
and you put your two cents in, what happens to the other  
penny?  
Why is the man who invests all your money called a  
broker?  
Why do croutons come in airtight packages? It's just stale  
bread to begin with.  
Why do we say something is out of whack? What is a  
"whack"?