



INTERMOUNTAIN  
TESOL



## Message from the Presidency

*Teresa A. Stillo Ramirez (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President)*



Today while organizing my shelves, I came across a book, "A Way and Ways" by Earl Stevick, a mid- 20<sup>th</sup> century linguist influential in developing the communicative approach of ESL teaching.

Perhaps neither the title nor the author rings a bell for some of you, but as a language educator for almost 30 years, this was one of the first books about methodology I read ; it contains an overview of approaches you may remember hearing about the grammar-translation method, the audiolingual method, the silent method, TPR.

While progress in pedagogy has largely relegated these approaches to peripheral/historical relevance, I do feel that elements of each has a place in our instructional tool box. As the title of the book cleverly and grammatically suggests, this is only about "a way" and "ways" not "THE" way.

This year, 2020 reminds us of the value of hindsight – that looking back on the development of ESL teaching theory and practices can serve us well as we look forward.

Current practice and 21<sup>st</sup> century methods may be more engaging and rooted in a better understanding of language acquisition, but many early immigrants managed to learn English as a second language very well and become very successful Americans, including most of my family. How did they learn English; how were they taught?

Just as societies and cultures are not homogenous, neither are learning styles. Thus the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, if it might contain anything truly new to teach us about teaching, should also compel us to look inwards and backwards, to extract the best of the old to inform the new. In this new millennium, we should not be tempted to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

Even as I write this, I find myself scouring my shelves for texts that were de rigueur in the late 80s as I was beginning my career, and I am thankful that I did not discard these treasures. Be sure to come to the ITESOL 2020 conference ("Hindsight is 20/20") where another treasure, Dr. Mary Ann Christison, will share with us the wisdom of her long, successful career in ESL.

## Coming Up

### ITESOL Spring Mini Conference

March 21, 9 am-1 pm

Keynote Speaker: **Dr. Lynn Henrichsen**

Location: Lumos Language School  
220 East 3900 South, Murray, Utah



TESOL Conference

March 31- April 3  
Denver, Colorado



ITESOL Conference

October 9-10

## Rocky Mountain Reception *at TESOL Conference in Denver*

Wednesday, April 1  
from 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm

Location: Atrium at Embassy Suites  
across from the Convention Center

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## Spotlights

*Included below are some of the new board members of the ITESOL board. We're glad they are aboard and that you can get to know them now too.*



*Milton Witt- Higher Ed Section Vice Chair*

Milton has been happily married for 37 years and he and his wife have 6 children and 15 grandchildren. He had the opportunity to live, work or travel to 13 foreign countries. He enjoys snow skiing as often as possible, playing pickleball on the weekends, hiking in the canyons along the Wasatch Front during the summer, reading non-fiction books and frequently getting together with family and friends.



*Kate Udall- Idaho Member-at-Large*

Kate Udall spent 12 years working with multi-lingual students at Boise State University and College of Western Idaho before beginning in her current position as Adult Education Manager at Idaho Office for Refugees. She enjoys her role building partners across Idaho to collaborate with in developing and supporting English programming for new Americans. She has taught English in Portugal, Korea and Mexico and has worked in higher education partner development in Asia and Latin America.

# What's happening in the ITESOL Community?

## *SUU Focuses on Experiential Learning*

Southern Utah University has one of the most unique IEP structures in the nation, and it was designed with a focus on experiential learning.

The structure is unique because the levels alternate between task-based instruction and project-based instruction. As students gain proficiency, teachers in project-based classes decrease the amount of scaffolding and structure in the projects so that students can design their own projects based on their interests.

Through this experiential learning, students are expected to gain a variety of academic and English language skills, become more familiar with university resources, and determine the path of their own individual learning.

Students often engage in survey-based projects, where they determine a subject they would like to learn about, survey other students or community members, conduct interviews with faculty, read and write about their topic, and then present their findings.

Other students engage in service-based projects and through SUU's many volunteer opportunities find meaningful ways to develop their language as they help fulfill a need in the community.

Once a semester, students have the chance to share with other students in the program what they have learned through their tasks or projects by participating in a mini-conference (set up in the style of poster presentations).

While task-based and project-based instruction both present unique challenges, SUU's IEP has also seen some tremendous benefits to students.

*Christin Stephens*

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*Newsletter Editor: Rachel Messenger*