



HAWAI'I TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

THE WORD - VOLUME 16 ISSUE 2

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For the latest information about HITESOL events throughout the year, please check our website:

www.hawaiitesol.org

Hawai'i TESOL, the local affiliate of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.), is a non-profit organization dedicated to building a community of professionals teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in the state of Hawai'i.



TESOL 2007: Tips for a First Time Attendee

By Laura Kimoto

If you will be attending the 41st TESOL Convention, here are a few tips that would make your professional development opportunity painless and worthwhile.

Funding

Do your homework way in advance! Many of you already know of the travel grant of \$500 that Hawaii TESOL offers to those who will attend the international convention. TESOL also offers many scholarships for graduate students, researchers, or teachers living outside of the US. For those of us practicing TESOLers in the US, there is the Professional Development Scholarship (PDS). http://www.tesol.org/sec_tesol/sec_document.asp?CID=278&DID=677

The PDS is valued up to \$1400 and includes the annual convention registration fee and the registration fee of a full-day or half-day pre-convention workshop. One scholarship is offered for every year of TESOL's existence, so there were 40 scholarships offered to TESOL professionals to attend the 2006 convention in Tampa Bay, Florida. It's too late to apply for the PDS to attend the 2007 convention, but Hawaii TESOLers should watch for the early November deadline for the 2008 scholarships (42 to be offered). The application process is surprisingly simple. You must draft a one-page

statement. No letter of recommendation is required. If you are selected, you must choose a pre-convention workshop to attend. Naturally you'll get a bigger bang for your buck with a full-day workshop. You must also commit to do two hours or more of volunteer work at the convention. You will also be invited to a TESOL-sponsored awards night at the convention at which you and other recipients are recognized.

Plan Ahead

If you will be attending the annual convention, it is vital that you find time in between your daily professional responsibilities to plan ahead. Invest time to pore over the pre-conference program and the TESOL website. This will save you time and save you from frustration later on. The pre-conference program that you receive in the mail is in no way complete. It just lists highlights. Access the TESOL website and copy and paste their conference sessions list into a Word table or an Excel file to create your own personalized schedule of conference sessions. Have columns for the date, time, session number, title, names of presenters, location, and interest area. Highlight the sessions you are interested in either

(Continued on page 7)



Mahalo Nui Loa, Randi

By Masaki Seo

One early Sunday morning in January, I received a phone call from Randi Perlman, the former president of Hawai'i TESOL. As soon as I answered the phone, Randi told me of her intention to leave Hawai'i at the end of the month. Her sudden and unexpected announcement took me by surprise. It occurred to me that it was too early for April Fools' Day jokes and,

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The 2006 Practical Workshops for ESL Professionals

By Masaki Seo

On November 8, 2006, Hawai'i TESOL held its annual Practical Workshops for ESL Professionals at McKinley School for Adults. The evening's two excellent presentations focused on practical and effective ESL/EFL classroom methods. Here is a brief overview of the workshops:

- Tomonori Ono, an MA student at Hawai'i Pacific University (HPU), and Grant Agawa, a graduate of HPU and currently working at HPU and Tokai International College, presented "Tips for Closing ESL/EFL Lessons." Their enlightening workshop provided a theoretical overview of lesson closure based on the literature with examples of different closure techniques for ESL/EFL classrooms. To build the awareness of the issue, they offered workshop participants a number of examples along with stimulating discussion questions.
- Jody Yamamoto, an instructor at Kapi'olani Community College, presented "Contextualizing Grammar Lessons in Content-Based Instruction." The theme of Jody's workshop was promoting content-based approaches for the ESL grammar classroom. To

that end, she showed a number of examples for creating content-based activities from the textbook material through small group discussions.

The outstanding presentations, the spacious facilities at McKinley School for Adults, and the delicious dinner catered by Nico's Pier 38 and Green Papaya, made for a most enjoyable evening. This year's Practical Workshops attracted 50 participants; a fine turnout for a mid-week, mid-semester event. Mahalo to all the workshop presenters, attendees, and our hosts at McKinley Community School for Adults, for ending 2006 on a cheerful note.

Masaki Seo, current president of Hawai'i TESOL, received his BA degree in TESL from Hawai'i Pacific University in Spring 2005 and his second BA degree in Religion from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in Summer 2005. He started his MA degree in Second Language Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in Fall 2006.



Mahalo Nui Loa, Randi (Cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

as we continued our conversation, I realized she was telling me the truth, and we had to understand her tough decision.

Randi contributed to the Hawai'i ESL community as a graduate student, an ESL teacher, and as a board member of Hawai'i TESOL. She became a member of Hawai'i TESOL as a graduate student in 2003 and began volunteering at various Hawai'i TESOL events. In the summer of 2005, Randi joined the Hawaii TESOL as vice president. In the summer of 2006, she was appointed president and has served her role extremely well. It is truly unfortunate to lose Randi from the Hawai'i TESOL board. On behalf of Hawai'i TESOL, I would like to express our great appreciation, aloha and mahalo to Randi for her leadership in promoting our

professional development organization.

Although Randi has moved to California, she continues to support us through e-mail and phone. We wish her all the best in California and look forward to seeing her again!! (Hopefully, she could help us tie up a garbage bag or two at future Hawai'i TESOL events.



Topics

We welcome any topic which would be of interest to HITESOL members or ESL professionals in Hawaii. We are interested in, for example: recommended internet sites (or a tech type column), book reviews, a grad student's perspective, field trips/learning outside the classroom, reports from members working overseas, content-based teaching ideas, using video and music in the classroom, online teaching, CALL, a "gripes" column, DOE news/concerns, K-12 news, outer island news, applying theory to practice, interview with someone in the field, etc. This list is by no means exhaustive. Please feel free to send any articles about these topics or others that you consider interesting to ESL educators in Hawaii. (You do not have to be a member of HITESOL to submit an article).

Format & Style

Articles should be no more than 4 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 12 point, attached as an MS Word document. Accompanying photos or clip art are optional but welcome. Please also include a short biography statement about the author (email address optional). In general, articles are written in a fairly informal, non-scholarly style. Please refer to previous issues of *The Word* to get a sense of the types of articles which appear in the newsletter, or contact the editors with questions.

Article Submission Guidelines: *The Word*

Submission Deadlines

Please note that the next deadline for submission is Wednesday, April 11, 2007. Please submit the articles via email to Elise Fader at fadere@byuh.edu.

We look forward to receiving your submissions!

Elise Fader Editor; Angell Siu layout & design editor of The Word.

Professional Development South of the Border

By Sally La Luzerne-Oi

“Why did you come to a MEXTESOL Conference?’ was the first question Mexican teachers asked me. The answer was simple. Taking part in a professional development event in México gave me an opportunity to return to the country where I first began my teaching career. Since then México and its people have held a special place in my heart.

MEXTESOL began in 1973 and held its first conference in 1974, three years before I went there to teach. To tell the truth, while teaching in Querétaro, I had no idea that MEXTESOL existed. Now the organization has 16 chapters throughout the country.

The 33rd National MEXTESOL Convention, “Reflecting on Our Teaching” was held in León, in the beautiful state of Guanajuato in the central part of the country referred to as Colonial México. León, it turns out, is the shoe capital of México although it appears that exports from China have done away with most of the family owned shoe businesses. León has a number of international businesses located there and a big new convention center which I was told is one of the largest in Latin America. It was there that the convention took place from October 12-15, 2006.

2400 people attended the demonstrations, presentations, workshops, poster sessions, and publishers’ exhibits over the three and half day convention. The majority of the presentations were geared to classroom teachers; many of the Mexican teachers I met taught at the elementary and secondary levels. Presenters hailed for the most part from México, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Plenary speakers included Keith Folse, Carolyn Graham, Barbara Foley, and Sandra Piai among others. Sandra Piai’s (University of Sussex, England) plenary was the one I enjoyed the most. Her talk “Reflecting on reflection” not only encompassed the convention theme, but was also an interesting exploration of what influences the way we reflect, whether reflective skills can be developed, what can help us reflect, and how reflection can help professionally.

At “New directions in ELT in México” given by Kay Mathews Davis, the English Language Officer for the U.S. Embassy in México, I learned that Mexican English teachers face some of the same problems many other EFL teachers do: their classes are large, they don’t have enough training (very few places to get a MATESL degree in México), and many teach in Spanish because they lack confidence in their English skills. According to Davis, English and computer courses are the two most sought after subjects. As a result, twenty-six Mexican states now teach English in primary school although each state handles it differently. Despite the demand for English classes, she and the teachers I spoke with said



English teachers need more recognition for their efforts and better pay, comments that sounded familiar.

This four day convention was very well organized right from the start. Proposal and registration forms were on the MEXTESOL Web site. Those forms and conference fees could be sent electronically. The Web site gave prices and links to hotels which offered

conferred conference rates. Many of the hotels had shuttles to pick up conference goers at the airport. The Web site also included a lot of information about León and the surrounding area. Once there, I found the Poliforum Convention Center was a five-minute walk from my hotel. This center was bright, high tech, and easy to navigate. Students from local schools stood at each conference room door to answer questions and hand out evaluation forms for each session. All of the sessions I attended were well done and left me with food for thought. There were daily tours of León and nearby cities for a minimal charge and free entertainment in the evenings. The extra activities were not as well organized though, probably because members of MEXTESOL were not directly in charge of them. The first night I wandered up and down the main street with a group of Mexican teachers trying to find the Explora Museum, location of the MEXTESOL welcome party. We ended up at an outdoor rock concert instead!

If you are looking for an international conference to attend or possibly present at, I highly recommend the MEXTESOL convention, especially if the 2006 one was indicative of them all. Although México may seem out of the way, Continental Airlines has direct flights from Honolulu to Houston, and from Houston it is possible to fly directly to many cities in México. Veracruz, a city I have heard is beautiful and is known for its seafood, will be the site of the November 8-11, 2007 convention. For more information visit the MEXTESOL Website at www.mextesol.org.



Sally La Luzerne-Oi is an Assistant Professor of English (ESL) at Hawai’i Pacific University. She is the Hawai’i TESOL/ TESOL Ukraine Liaison.



On behalf of Hawaii TESOL, we would like to thank the following local businesses for their donation to the Hawaii TESOL Travel Grant Raffle at the annual conference in February. As a result of their donations, we raised \$103 towards the Travel Grant Raffle Fund.

Thank you for support of the language teaching community in Hawaii.

Manoa Valley Theater
The Plantation Cafe at Ala Moana Hotel

Vocabulary Competency in Academic Reading

By Makiko Ebata

Over the past half decade, English education in Japan has been moving backward, leaving numbers of students behind. Although they memorize many English words in Japanese, they are unable to use them in actual conversations since they do not clearly understand word usage. Considering this, one can reason that successful ESL/EFL reading can be achieved by effective instruction of vocabulary in their appropriate context. Thus, I began examining how to develop successful English readers by placing a special focus on building vocabulary competency. Two separate vocabulary activities were conducted before reading a passage and another conducted after reading a passage. The students' reactions and effectiveness are analyzed in this paper.

Targeted Students and Materials Used in the Class

The targeted learners were twenty Japanese students who are intermediate and advanced English learners intending to study abroad in two years. I distributed 400-800 word reading passages which contained approximately 20 new vocabulary words that are essential for academic study. Since all the students were required to purchase the *Longman iBT* textbook, most of the passages used in class were taken from it.

Concentration Game (before the learners read the passage)

In this activity, forty cards were prepared with a new word or the meaning of the word written on each. All cards were put face-down on a desk and a group of four students took turns picking two cards at a time. The goal was to pick a new word and its matching meaning.

The graph (please refer to Appendix A) demonstrates that more than half the students were content with this vocabulary activity. (The points show the extent to which they agree on the questionnaire.) However, although half of them enjoyed the game, the second graph (please refer to Appendix B) shows that a few learners found this activity ineffective for learning new words. This made me realize that they were accustomed to a teacher-centered classroom rather than a learner-centered one in which learner communication thrives. Interaction made them feel uneasy, and they would lose their motivation both to participate in any activities and learn the words. It was also evident that some Japanese learners believe that teachers have all the answers, and that classmates particularly do not. This makes it difficult to create a comfortable learning environment in academic English classes even though serious and concentrated instructions are necessary in order to motivate learners to reach their goals and to strengthen their language competency. I strongly believed that the targeted language should be used rather than just memorized. This belief led me to strive for a new approach combining both instructions that learners strongly relied on with interaction.

Matching Activity (before they read the passage)

The graph (please refer to Appendix C) shows student satisfaction with the Matching Activity. In this activity, new vocabulary and their meanings were written on a handout, and in pairs, the students were told to match them up by drawing lines between them. The aim of this activity was to strengthen reading skills by practicing word speculation and thereby put students at ease with encountering unfamiliar words when they take the actual TOEFL test a year later. According to the graph, more than half the students enjoyed this activity in which they interacted with their partner guessing the words. This activity also seemed to create a comfortable and enjoyable class atmosphere.

As indicated by the graph (please refer to Appendix D), no one found this activity ineffective for learning new words. This and my observation in class suggests that students preferred guessing new vocabulary words by paying careful attention to prefixes and suffixes, which draw on their current vocabulary knowledge. This activity has made me understand the importance of giving students time to use their own knowledge to discover new clues; that is to say, how to deduce foreign words in reading. Language teachers should not only instruct but also lead students to the stage where they can utilize their prior language knowledge as much as possible.

Pair-Work Using Dictionaries (after they read the passage)

I made the students read a passage without clues. A time limit was set and the classroom atmosphere was much more tense than the previous reading classes in which they enjoyed new vocabulary activities. After they finished reading, they were asked some questions regarding the reading passage. Half the questions were verbal, the other half were written. Almost all the students were unable to answer the same questions because of their unfamiliarity with new key words. After that, with a partner, they were allowed to read the passage again and check new words using their dictionaries. After they could understand the content of the passage, I made them summarize the passage with three sentences in English. Making students summarize the passage allowed me to see how much they actually understood of both the new words and the passage.

The Comparison

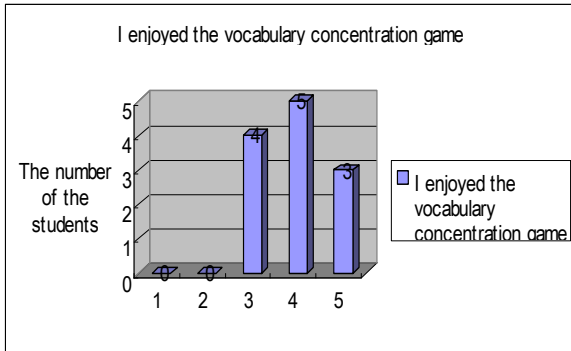
The graph (please refer to Appendix E) illustrates the students' reactions to the timing of vocabulary introduction. More than half the students found the introduction of new words before reading more effective than after reading a passage. Other students found it efficient to learn new words after they read a passage. Their reasons are shown in appendix F.

Conclusion

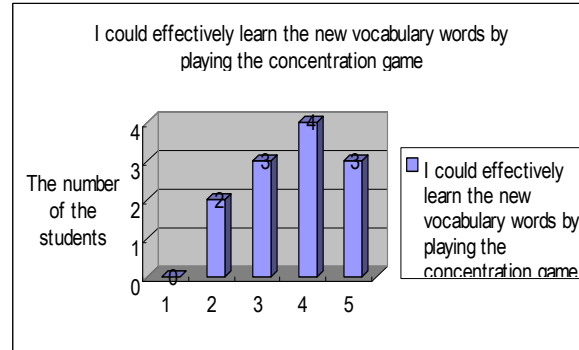
When to introduce new vocabulary while teaching reading skills is a controversial issue in ESL/EFL. In order to be familiar with more effective methods of vocabulary instruction, I conducted three activities in my class. Students reacted positively to learning new words beforehand, underlining the resulting ability to read a passage smoothly by knowing new words beforehand, a better understanding of the content of a passage, and an opportunity to review new words while reading a passage. On the other hand, students also recognized the benefits of learning new words after they read a passage: gaining the ability to speculate about unfamiliar words while reading as well as strengthening reading skills without clues.

Vocabulary (Cont.)

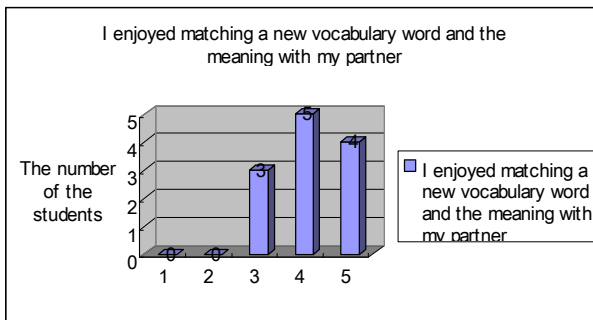
Appendix A



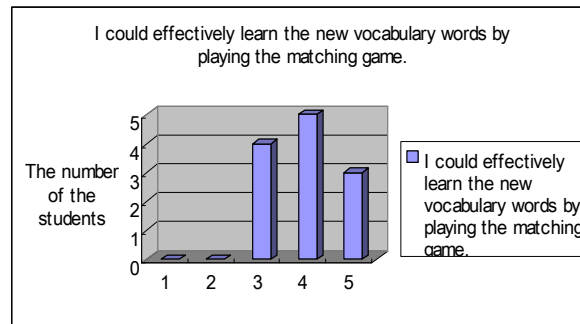
Appendix B



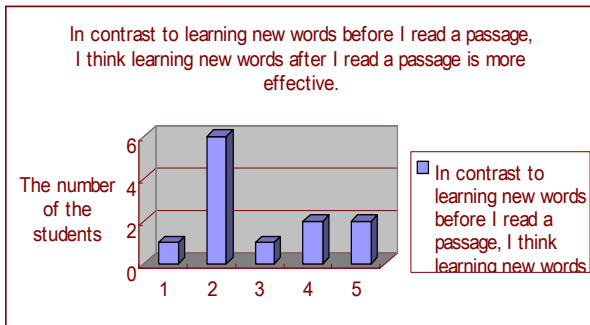
Appendix C



Appendix D



Appendix E



Appendix F

■ Students who think learning new words before reading is more effective stated:

"I could read the passage smoothly by knowing new words beforehand."

"Learning new words before I read helps me understand the content of the story easily." "I could review the new words while I read the passage."

■ Students who think learning new words after reading is more effective said:

"I want to guess new words while reading because I need to be used to that for tests."

"I feel I need to practice reading without knowing each word in a passage."

Makiko Ebata teaches EFL oral and academic classes at Digital Hollywood University in Tokyo, Japan. She has three years experience teaching EFL at a high school. She taught ESL classes at two language schools, a middle school and Hawaii Pacific University in Hawaii after graduated from MATESL at HPU.

Forming Groups for Group Work

By Julie Akey

Certainly every ESL/EFL teacher uses group work in the classroom. Sometimes, however, forming groups becomes a monotonous task because the teacher does it the same way every day: by counting off. Try out a few of the techniques listed below to add some creativity and energy to your group formation.

The most popular tactic for forming groups is undoubtedly counting off to a specific number. A helpful hint when counting off is to first decide how many groups you want, then count off to that number. If you have 15 students and want three groups, count off to three. How about if you want groups of three students each? Divide the number of students by the number of people you want in a group to find the number you should count off to. For example, to make three-person groups in a class of 15, divide 15 by three. You'll then count off by five. Without a doubt, forming groups in this fashion gets to be a bit boring as it is usually always the teacher that counts off and tells the groups where to work.

To empower your students and make the classroom more democratic, try asking a different student every day to count off and arrange groups. Students quickly discover this is easier said than done. Inevitably, a couple students don't remember their number, didn't hear their number, or weren't sure what their number was. When the counting student realizes this, it becomes a good learning experience for him/her in patience, giving directions, and organization.

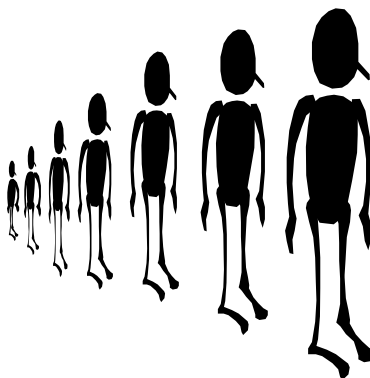
Instead of keeping students in the same group for the next activity, you can employ one of these ideas for changing groups.

- Ask the youngest member to move to the next group
- Ask the oldest member to move to the next group
- Ask the member who has been at your school the longest to move to the next group
- Ask the member who has most recently arrived to move to the next group
- Ask the member with the longest hair to move to the next group
- Ask the member with the shortest hair to move to the next group
- Ask the member who has a birthday closest to today to move to the next group
- Ask the member who has a birthday furthest from today to move to the next group

You may also want to ask students to find a partner they have never worked with before. Or, if you have a variety of nationalities in the class, ask them to form a group with students representing several different nationalities. When forming groups of students with more than one L1, it becomes necessary for them to speak English at all times. This is a good strategy to employ when students work on group projects or presentations.

Students readily laugh and joke when some of these more creative strategies are used to form groups. This reduces nervousness and lowers students' affective filter. Additionally, using some of these strategies will keep students moving around, awake, and energized. These are a sure way to liven up your classroom.

Julie Akey is an Adjunct ESL Instructor at Hawaii Pacific University. She received her Masters in TESL at HPU. She has traveled to 34 countries and is a mother of four-year-old twins. jakey@campus.hpu.edu



eTraining: Instruction at Your Finger Tips

By Dr. J. Perry Christensen

Some tools of the trade remain constant such as students, lessons, and homework. However, how the students come dressed to class, how the lessons are taught, and how the homework is completed is constantly shifting. In light of the changing world, I've heard talk that teachers would no longer be needed in the future as computers would take over that job. However, I prefer to subscribe to the notion that technology will not replace the teacher although a teacher who knows technology will replace a teacher who doesn't. With this in mind, I'd like to share a few resources that I've found useful in keeping up with change.

First, publishers are getting in on the act of using technology to offer free online training of their products to teachers. We all know that the real motive is to make a sale, but the training is free and easy, and they just may have the product teachers are looking for. For example, a few times a year Houghton Mifflin emails me about some online training they are conducting. I usually have to register on a website, giving my name and email address. Then they email me a toll free telephone number, a website link, and sometimes a password. On the day of the presentation, I call the toll free number and listen to the live presentation while I watch a PowerPoint type of presentation on my computer by following the link they sent. If I really want to, I may even ask a question or two, or just lurk in the background, absorbing what information I can.

The last publisher event I attended was how to use Houghton Mifflin's WriteSpace for Developmental Writing. I don't subscribe to WriteSpace, but it was an easy way for me to gain insight into one of the many online tools available without leaving the comfort of my office and computer. I believe I Skyped in and muted my microphone and listened to the presentation through my computer speakers while munching on some popcorn. Other online training I've received from Houghton Mifflin was how to use one of their new academic vocabulary books. The authors, who probably know most about the book, were the featured guest speakers. This got me to think about how I teach vocabulary in my class and if I really need their book or maybe a book from another publisher. Well, I'm still thinking about it, but this is knowledge that I hadn't had before.

The second type of training at your finger tips is TESOL's Electronic Village On-Line (EVO). This is a great opportunity to learn new skills while at the same time networking with ESL professionals around the world (and you don't even need to leave the comfort of your own home). Once again, all you need is a computer and internet access. I also recommend a microphone headset so that you can participate in some of the voice messaging as well as computer phone conversations.

Every year, registration usually begins on January 1st. The sessions start in the middle of January and continue for six weeks until the end of February. All the sessions are free to anyone, and you don't need to be a member of TESOL to join in. I've found that the moderators are nice, and the other class members are

most helpful. However, you need an adventurous spirit and not afraid to click on links and try new things. If I ever get stuck, I look for one of the moderator's email on one of the pages and shoot off a quick plea for help. There are also chat rooms and message boards that are set up to help the technology challenged, which most of the participants were not too long ago.

This year there are more than a dozen EVO sessions. Some of the session topics are: *Beginning Internet Activities*, *Blogging for Beginners*, *Digital Gaming and Language Learning*, *E-Assessment Tools for Language Teaching*, and *Teaching with PowerPoint*.

In this year's opening ceremony, which was a live Skypecast or streaming audio, one of the moderators testified of how the *Becoming a Webhead* course had introduced her to a community of online language teachers from around the world who share and practice the skills they need for online teaching. With the skills this moderator gained, it opened the path to a new job. So what is happening online is definitely of great value.

The third way to receive online training at your fingertips is to participate in the upcoming *WiAOC 2007: Webheads in Action Online Convergence* which is scheduled to take place May 18-20, 2007. I participated in the first online convergence about a year and a half ago and thoroughly came away on a technological high (see my article in the February 2006 issue of *The Word*, <http://www.hawaiiitesol.org/Word%20Feb%202006.pdf>). I'm really looking forward to this second online convergence.

An online convergence is just like a conference with live sessions being offered online around the clock for three days. For the last one, each session usually had streaming audio, a chat room, and a display area for showing the presenter's graphics or text. I can hardly wait to see what new technology they will be using this year to make their presentations. I highly recommend that you log into a session, or two, or more. You'll be extending your skills and networking with other professionals from around the world.

Links

Houghton Mifflin online training

<http://hmco.webex.com>

Information about WiAOC

<http://wiaoc.org>

This year's EVO site

<http://>

evo07sessions.pbwiki.com/#TheElectronicVillageOnlineSessions

Dr. J. Perry Christensen has been the Hawaii TESOL webmaster for the past several years. He has a love hate relationship with technology but has learned not to get frustrated when it doesn't work.

