



## President's Corner

by Christy Pearson

Dear MITESOLers,

I hope you are having a pleasant and relaxing summer. As we begin to gear up for fall, I wanted to share with you a few things that MITESOL has been doing over the past six months, as well as invite you to attend the up-coming conference.

For those that attended the international TESOL convention earlier this year, you may have heard that issues have arisen regarding the new citizenship tests which affect some of the learners we teach. TESOL has a socio-political concerns committee that is currently working on these issues. Since Michigan is a port-of-entry state, national issues in this area also significantly impact ESL learners and teachers here.

(Continued on p. 2)

## Audio Portfolios – An easier way to create and organize speaking assignments

by Anne Todd

Often the initial investment of time and resources required of teachers and students to master technology make CALL an unattractive prospect. In CALL, simple can be better, and Audio Portfolios is such an example.

Audio Portfolios (<http://distancelearning.llc.msu.edu/audioportfolio/>) was developed at MSU's Language Learning Center by Dennie Hoopingartner. It is a relatively simple, web-based audio or audio-video recording application which allows language learners to digitally record speaking assignments. The convenience of this application will appeal to teachers who want to assign speaking homework but do not relish the idea of toting around cassette tapes. To use this application, students and teachers need a computer, a fast internet connection (not dial-up!), and a digital microphone. They may also use a webcam to capture audio *and* video.

(Continued. on p. 5)

## Review of Vocabulary Myths

By Terry Pruett-Said

*Vocabulary Myths: Applying Second Language Research to Classroom Teaching* by Keith S. Folse, The University of Michigan Press, 2004

In *Vocabulary Myths*, Keith Folse explores what he refers to as the eight myths of vocabulary learning. In the introductory chapter he answers the question "What is vocabulary?" and makes it clear he isn't just referring to single words. He then answers the questions "What does it mean to know a word? What does knowing a word include?"

(Continued on p. 8)

### In This Issue

President's Corner	1
Audio Portfolios	1
Book Review	1
Board Talk	2
Be a Mentor	9
Awards & Opportunities	10
Slate of Officers: 2005 Elections	12
Workshop Updates	14
Affiliate-Wide Book Club	15

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## Board Talk

By Christina Gonzalez Dekutoski

It is hard to believe six months have passed since my first entry as Secretary of MITESOL! During this time I have learned quite a bit about the organization and its wonderful and talented leaders and members. The Board has been working diligently in the following areas;

*MITESOL Website* – The Board is reviewing several options to update the website in order to make it more user- friendly.

*New Special Interest Group* – The expressed interest and need for the formation of a Socio- Political SIG was brought to the attention of the Board by John McLaughlin. The formation of this new SIG was approved and will be headed by John McLaughlin. More information concerning the new SIG will be available on the MITESOL website.

*MITESOL Promotional Material* – A brochure is being developed to promote our organization and give an overview of what MITESOL has to offer its members. The Board's goal is to have this brochure available for distribution at this year's Fall Conference.

*Fall Conference* – Carol Wilson Duffy has been hard at work planning for the Fall Conference. The two days will be filled with excellent presentations in the area of ESL, a panel discussion at the luncheon, as well as a keynote speaker. The Board welcomes friends and colleagues of MITESOL members to attend the conference and encourage early registration. ◇

## From the Co-Editors

By Lisa Hutchison & Danielle Valentini

Full of important information, this edition of MITESOL Messages will get you up-to-date and motivated for the start of another academic year. Please consider submitting an article for the February edition. YOUR professional organization would love to hear about your research, teaching experiences or classroom practices. ◇

*The Newsletter Co-Editors reserve the right to edit any material submitted for publication to enhance clarity or style. Submissions may also be shortened to fit available space. The author will be consulted if changes are substantial.*

## President's Corner

(Cont. from p. 1)

We are grateful that John McLaughlin has stepped forward and will be working on these and related issues at our state level. If you are interested in helping in this area, email John at johnmcl@umich.edu.

In order to better serve both you and the communities in which you teach, we have been working on up-dating and expanding the MITESOL website, as well as adding in the possibility of discussion groups. Over the course of the next year, we hope to add easily accessible articles on a range of topics of interest to the membership-at-large. Keep checking the website periodically to see what's new and thank Sue Glowski for all her work when you see her at the conference.

We are also working on writing and printing new informational pamphlets about the organization and what it can offer members. Our current brochure is dated and rather formal; a goal of the new one is to be more user-friendly and visually enticing. This is a significant undertaking, as we plan on the possibility of multiple pamphlets with different foci. If you see Carolyn Fike, please thank her for taking this on. Look for these new pamphlets at the fall conference.

Several members have requested a new Special Interest Group (SIG). You speak and we listen! The proposed SIG would involve the interface of second language acquisition and special needs (for example, learning disabilities, language impairments, and such). In order to better gauge whether there is enough interest to form a new SIG, we will be offering a short session during the special SIG time at the fall conference. In addition to checking the level of interest, the purpose of this meeting will be to ascertain which specific areas are of most interest and/or concern to the membership regarding scaffolding language learning in doubly challenged learners. If you cannot attend this session, yet are interested in this potential SIG, please email me at pearsonc@gvsu.edu.

As can be seen above, we are working towards meeting your expressed needs and concerns. Therefore, I pose the following question to you: *What do you want out of MITESOL, your support organization?* Please contact me and let me know your thoughts. Also, as an organization staffed solely by volunteers, we are always in need of your help and involvement. If you would like to contribute in any way, please don't hesitate to contact me.

(Continued. on p. 4)

## MITESOL Advisory Board

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## President's Corner

(Cont. from p. 3)

Enjoy this issue of *MITESOL Messages*! Carol Wilson-Duffy has been working extremely hard on the fall conference. You will find registration information included in this issue; it can also be found on the website. Please note the information on awards in this issue. Noel Woodcraft, Danielle Valentini, and Sean Anderson are newer members who have stepped forward and become actively involved, trying to make this organization one that truly serves you. Noel was a tremendous help last year as exhibits manager for the conference and continues in this role. Danielle, as you can see in this issue, has been busily at work with Lisa Hutchison, redesigning the newsletter, along with all else that goes into its production. Sean is our new computer wizard, helping out on multiple fronts.

I hope to see many of you at the conference. Please consider yourselves personally invited. It is a wonderful opportunity to share and learn from each other, networking across the state on many issues. As I mentioned above, MITESOL functions solely by the efforts of volunteers. Please thank the following people, who work tirelessly (and tiredly) behind the scenes, when you see them at the conference or elsewhere: Jennifer Craft (immediate past president), Carol Wilson-Duffy (president-elect and conference chair), Ildi Thomas (treasurer), Cristina Gonzalez (secretary), Susan Glowski (communications coordinator), Jacquie Osborn (membership coordinator), Pamela Bogart (list serve manager), Carolyn Fike (public relations), Lisa Hutchison and Danielle Valentini (newsletter co-editors), Noel Woodcraft (exhibits manager), John McLaughlin (socio-political concerns), Sean Anderson (computer issues), and Carol Kubota, John McLaughlin, Ewa Ostrowski, Terry Said, Anne Todd, and Heidi Vellenga (SIG leaders). And there are so many others of you doing work in your communities and across the state – *Thank you!* ◇

Happy MITESOLing!

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Christy Pearson with fellow MITESOL members  
in San Antonio at TESOL 2005

## Audio Portfolios

(Cont. from p. 1)

Using Audio Portfolios, students log into a web-based application and digitally record themselves in response to an assignment developed by their teacher. They can then listen to their recordings, or “clips”, and rerecord if desired. Once they are satisfied with their performance, they share their audio (or audio-video) clip with their teacher for feedback. When the teacher logs in, he or she pulls up the class list, and then can see all of the recordings which individual students in their class have shared.

The application is password protected, so only the teacher can hear students’ shared recordings. However, if students want to share their recordings with someone else, they can use the “Share with Friends” function, which allows them to publish an audio or audio-video clip to a webpage. Users can then copy the web page address, and email it to friends. This same function can also be used by teachers to create audio or audio-video clips for listening assignments or demonstrations.

### Practical & Pedagogical Benefits of Audio Portfolios:

- It eliminates the need to carry around bulky audio cassettes when assigning speaking homework. All students’ speech samples are in one place, and can be accessed *anywhere* with a computer and internet connection.
- The only software requirements are a web browser with the free Flash plugin. It works the same on Windows, Macintosh or Linux.
- Students can self-monitor their speech patterns and test hypotheses about their second language production in a protected environment. Because students can (and often do!) review and rerecord many times before submitting the recording to their teacher, it encourages this type of self-assessment.
- Shy students are less inhibited by anxiety, since there is no immediate “live audience.” Students normally overshadowed by others in class are given the opportunity to speak.
- Teachers are able to provide individualized feedback for speech samples.
- The video-recording function is a great tool if teachers want to elicit a spontaneous speech sample, since it discourages students from pre-scripting their answers and simply reading them off.
- The “Share with Friends” function allows teachers to also create listening assignments for students. Students can then do the assignment at their own pace.

(Continued. on p. 6)

## Audio Portfolios

(Cont. from p. 5)

### Ideas for Using Audio Portfolios

#### Traditional Speaking Assignments

Pronunciation can be addressed by having students read a paragraph (either a pre-written one, or one written by the student). Grammar can be focused on by giving students a prompt that will elicit the form, such as “Tell me what you did last weekend” to elicit past tense. Global speaking assignments can also be used to assess not just pronunciation and grammar, but also fluency, word choice, etc. For global speaking assignments, teachers may want to ask students to stay within a given time frame.

#### Speaking Journals

A good way to encourage speaking fluency is to ask students to record a weekly speaking journal, addressed to the teacher. The teacher could provide some suggested topics, or students could tell about their week. By keeping the topics simple and open and not grading journals on speaking performance, (I would recommend credit/no credit) students are given a low-anxiety forum for self-expression and speaking practice.

#### Teaching Speaking Self-Assessment

Have students record responses to a few different prompts that elicit spontaneous speech. Provide the students with some self-evaluation scales for fluency, pausing, intonation, pronunciation of individual sounds, grammar, word choice, etc. Have them rate themselves and make notes of a few mistakes that they think they made for each category. The teacher can use the same rating scale to give similar feedback. This way, students can practice identifying their own problems, and they can see where their own self-perception differs from that of their teacher.

#### Using Share with Friends to communicate with pen-pals

Students can use the “Share with Friends” function to communicate across the world. If teachers can find another language class to participate, students can send each other “Audio postcards” using this function.



(Continued on p. 7)

## Audio Portfolios

(Cont. from p. 6)

### **Use the Share with Friends feature to create audio / video clips for activities**

Teachers create the student accounts for their own classes, entering in the names of their students and setting user IDs and passwords. They can add themselves to their class list as a student so they can also log in as a student. To create an audio or audio-video clip, teachers log in as a student and then use the “Share with Friends” function to create a webpage. These clips can be used for several things:

#### ***Demonstrating Pronunciation***

It often helps students to be able to hear and SEE someone pronouncing difficult sounds, especially if the lip shape or movement is helpful. Teachers can record a pronunciation video explanation / demonstration.

#### ***Giving Feedback***

Instead of written feedback, teachers can provide oral feedback on a speaking assignment. This is especially helpful if teachers want to model the correct way of saying something for a student. For more advanced students, providing this feedback in the second language also provides listening practice.

#### ***Creating Listening Assignments***

Teachers can create listening assignments (with or without video) using the “Share with Friends” function. Listening assignments can be used for schema building to help prepare students for speaking assignments; teachers can model an example response to a speaking prompt.

A subscription for Audio Portfolios costs only \$50 a year for each teacher, and allows that teacher to use the application with all of their classes. To explore Audio Portfolios, go to <http://distancelearning.llc.msu.edu/audioportfolio/>. You can log in as a teacher using the username *teacher*, password *teacher*, and log in as a student using the username *guest*, password *guest*. ◇

*Anne Todd coordinates less commonly taught languages and teaches ESL at Michigan State University.*

## Review of Vocabulary Myths

(Cont. from p. 1)

He states that knowing a word not only means understanding its meaning, but also includes how frequently it is used, in which situations it is used, and whether or not it has a positive, negative, or neutral connotation. Furthermore, it includes knowing its spelling, pronunciation, and part of speech.

In the rest of the book, Folse discusses his eight myths of vocabulary learning with a chapter for each myth. He believes the myths are axioms that many of us believe are true about vocabulary learning, but aren't backed up by research. His eight myths are:

1. In learning another language, vocabulary is not as important as grammar or other areas.
2. Using word lists to learn second language vocabulary is unproductive.
3. Presenting new vocabulary in semantic sets facilitates learning.
4. The use of translations to learn new vocabulary should be discouraged.
5. Guessing words from context is an excellent strategy for learning second language vocabulary.
6. The best vocabulary learners make use of one or two really good specific vocabulary learning strategies.
7. The best dictionary for second language learners is a monolingual dictionary.
8. Teachers, textbooks, and curricula cover second language vocabulary adequately.

Folse divides each chapter into three parts. He begins each chapter with a section called **In the Real World** where he presents a real life learning situation to demonstrate how certain beliefs we have about vocabulary learning may indeed not be true. The second section of each chapter is called **What the Research Says**. In this part he presents and discusses previous research to debunk the particular vocabulary myth. In many of the chapters he clearly lays out the research in charts giving the author and date of the studies as well as its purposes and findings. For example, in the chapter on myth five, Folse presents seven studies' findings in a table format that show among other results that context clues in the real world may not be as available or useful as thought, and that learners were only able to correctly guess a meaning even using available strategies 26% of the time. The third section of each chapter is subtitled **What You Can Do**. This is the part that practicing teachers will perhaps like the best as it is where Folse gives teaching suggestions that can be easily used to support vocabulary development. For example, in the chapter on myth four, he suggests that teachers shouldn't stop a student who is jotting down a translation of a new English word, and they should allow a more knowledgeable student help another student who speaks the same language.

In his concluding thoughts Folse stresses that vocabulary teaching needs to be an integral part of language teaching. For those of you just looking for some ideas, *Vocabulary Myths* offers in an easy-to-read format plenty of information. For those of you interested in further research in vocabulary acquisition, Folse presents a number of studies in each chapter as well as 17 pages of works cited. ◇



## Be a Mentor/Mentee

By Marian Woyciehowicz Gonsior

Last fall the Post- Secondary Students Programs Special Interest Group started a Mentor/Mentee program. Since then, there has been some activity between mentors and mentees, but the program definitely needs more volunteers.

What does it involve? First, decide if you want to be a mentor or a mentee. A mentor has experience in the field and wants to share his/her tips on surviving the difficulties and multiplying the joys of working in TESOL. A mentor does not have to be a full-time faculty member—many of us with much experience are not—but merely someone who will take the time to reach out to a newcomer. On the other hand, a mentee—someone seeking advice—does not have to be a complete beginner in the field. Maybe he/she is thinking of entering a new area of TESOL and would like another member's advice on how to get started. There are many reasons that a MITESOL member might want to be a mentor or a mentee.

Having a mentoring relationship with another person can be a wonderful experience. Even sharing a tiny idea with another instructor can be beneficial. One mentor shared a portion of an e-mail she received from her grateful mentee:

“One little thing has been especially helpful to me, and that is your index cards with the magnetic strip on the back. Again, I didn't do your pairs game with [the students], but used the idea to develop a different kind of matching activity that worked well with the size of my class (20 students). Beyond that, however, [your cards] have given me inspiration to use magnetic strips to use visual aids in the classroom. I wouldn't have thought of that without your materials!”

Like so many words, *mentor* comes to us from the ancient Greeks. According to tradition, the first Mentor was a wise and trusted counselor to whom the heroic figure Odysseus entrusted his son. Won't you consider following in the footsteps of the original Mentor?

If you would like to become a mentor or mentee, please send me an e-mail at [gonsiomc@udmercy.edu](mailto:gonsiomc@udmercy.edu). Be sure to include the following information: Your name, position/title, work address, and e-mail address. Also, let me know if you want to be a mentor or a mentee. Newly graduated MATESOL students are especially encouraged to sign up to become mentees. Networking is what MITESOL is all about, and this is a great way for the MITESOL network to expand and encourage newcomers to the field. *Even if you signed up before, please send me your information again, so I can update my list and pass on accurate information.* ◇

*Marian Woyciehowicz Gonsior works in the American Language & Culture Program at the University of Detroit Mercy*

## Awards and Opportunities

### Three Members Receive MITESOL Affiliate Award

This year Sean Anderson, Danielle Valentini, and Noel Woodard were awarded the MITESOL Affiliate award for their significant contributions as new members. We feel their assistance throughout this year has truly been invaluable in our ability to grow and develop as a non-profit volunteer based organization.

Sean Anderson; for example, with his B.S. in Computer Information Systems, volunteered to set up our discussion boards communication system, which we would not have been able to do without him. Sean also helped with our very successful spring technology workshop and has lots of plans to assist with our web site this fall.

Another of our dedicated MITESOL members, Danielle Valentini, has also worked hard to make our organization flourish. She is the co-editor of the MITESOL Newsletter, and although Danielle will be living in Lima, Peru for one year while teaching English there, she is planning on continuing with her position despite this long distance.

Last but not least, Noel Woodward, who has been a TESOL member since 1999, agreed to take over the Exhibits Manager position for the 2004 MITESOL Conference when the previous Exhibits Manager had to leave the country unexpectedly. We think everyone would agree that Noel did a fantastic job at this past conference, organizing the exhibitors and the raffle. She has also agreed to serve in the position for the next two years and we truly appreciate her efforts.

All three awardees will receive a complimentary TESOL membership for their active involvement in MITESOL and we thank all of them for their hard work, diligence, and energy! ◇

### **MONEY to Go to Tampa!**

It's not too early to start planning to attend the TESOL Convention in Tampa, FL, next spring. Graduate students who are members of TESOL and MITESOL can apply for Marckwardt travel grants from both organizations. The TESOL Marckwardt Travel Grant applications (for registration fees plus \$500) are due November 1, 2005. Although MITESOL Marckwardt Award applications (for pre-registration fees only) are not due until Jan. 1, 2006, the applicant must also have applied for the TESOL award. For more information look on the web:

TESOL: [http://www.tesol.org/s\\_tesol/sec\\_document.asp?CID=370&DID=674](http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/sec_document.asp?CID=370&DID=674)

MITESOL: <http://www.mitesol.org/events/travel.html>

## MITESOLer Wows TESOL!!!

One of our members, Marta Dmytrenko-Ahrabian at Wayne State University's ELI, was the recipient of the Mary Finocchiaro Award for Excellence in the Development of Pedagogical Materials at TESOL this year in San Antonio. The purpose of this award is "to recognize a TESOL member(s) who has achieved excellence through the development of practical pedagogical materials not currently under consideration for publication." Marta has been doing outstanding work in the delivery of listening materials via computerized video lectures. Bravo, Marta! Be sure to congratulate her if you see her! ◇

### Annual MITESOL Reception at TESOL, San Antonio

Muchas gracias to the sponsors of this year's MITESOL Reception at TESOL, Eastern Michigan University, the ELI at the University of Michigan, and the ELC at Michigan State University!!! About 60



MITESOLers gathered at the Original Mexican Restaurant on San Antonio's Riverfront on March 31 for a tasty buffet of Mexican and Tex-Mex favorites including quesadillas, flautas, tamales and more. Much socializing and networking took place over the two hours we were all together. Gracias, as well, to the staff at the Original Mexican Restaurant for their outstanding service and for making this a fun and memorable event! ◇

MITESOL friend Brian Porter, and members Ildi Thomas and Thom Cullen enjoy the opportunity to socialize while in San Antonio.

Shari Weisbaum, Jackie Moase-Burke and Diane Larsen-Freeman share experiences while visiting at the MITESOL reception.



## Elections at the Fall Conference

### Nominated Slate of Officers for 2005 Elections

#### Executive Committee

##### **President-Elect and Conference Chair** (3-year term, including years as president and past-president)

Susan E. Dyste

Currently a faculty member in the English Language Institute at Central Michigan University, Sue has taught composition and ESL at Delta, Northwood, CMU, and SVSU. From 2002-2004, she served as the Interim Director of CMU's English Language Institute. Due to her love of teaching, in the fall of 2004, Sue returned to the classroom at CMU, where she continues to be challenged and energized by her students.

##### **Communications Coordinator** (2-year term)

Sean Anderson

Sean is currently working toward his MEd TESOL through GVSU. He received his B.S. in Computer Information Systems from DeVry University in Addison, IL, and currently works as an application developer in Holland. Sean has a strong interest in web application development. Upon completion of his MEd, Sean hopes to pursue a career in K-12 ESL education. Sean also has an interest in pursuing degrees in Applied Linguistics and Computational Linguistics.

#### Advisory Board

##### **Adult Education SIG Leader** (2-year term)

Lois Doll

I have taught ESL/EFL since 1993 primarily in the Chicago area but for the last few years in Grand Rapids, MI. I've taught adults from a great many countries with different backgrounds, needs, and levels, and the classes have ranged from one on one to over 40 in a classroom. I've also taught in Japan and Mexico and have a TEFL certificate from New World Teachers which provides an intensive program in communicative teaching. I'm working on my master's degree in TESOL at Grand Valley University and currently working for a private language school in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

##### **Post-Secondary Student Programs SIG Leader** (2-year term)

Nigel A. Caplan

Nigel A. Caplan currently teaches at Michigan State University's English Language Center. Originally from

## **Elections at the Fall Conference**

*(Cont. from p. 12)*

Leeds, UK, he has taught on both sides of the Atlantic and holds degrees from Cambridge University in England and the University of Pennsylvania. He has presented papers and workshops on drama, literacy and writing at regional and international TESOL conventions, including two MITE-SOL conferences, and published articles in several newsletters, *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics*, and *The Lion and the Unicorn*. He currently lives in a small village you've probably never heard of in mid-Michigan and has joined the local community theater troupe.

### **K-12 SIG Leader (2-year term)**

Victor Perez

Victor was born in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico and came to Michigan as a migrant student. He graduated from Fennville High School and received a BA in education from WMU and an MA in educational leadership from GVSU. He is presently working toward an MA in TESOL at GVSU.

Victor has worked in Migrant/Bilingual education for over 15 years and in administrative positions for about five years. At present, he is working with the Migrant/Bilingual Program for the West Ottawa Public Schools District in Holland, Michigan.

### **Workplace/ESP SIG Leader (2-year term)**

Carol Kubota

Currently the SIG leader for Workplace/ESP, I own Battle Creek Language and Culture Center in Battle Creek, MI. I have been teaching ESL/EFL for almost 30 years, starting at age 19 in Mexico City to support myself with my only qualification of being a native speaker. Returning to the States, I pursued a degree to teach here, but married my Japanese boyfriend before finishing my degree, and we went to Japan for 5 years, where I again taught EFL. My husband was then transferred to Michigan, which is where I have been for 20 years. I have since finished both my BA and MATESOL degrees.

### **Professional Development, Research, and Teacher Resources SIG Leader (2-year term)**

Heidi E. Vellenga

Heidi E. Vellenga (BA Calvin College, MA Indiana University) has been teaching and researching second language pedagogy for most of her life, professionally in the last 12 years as a graduate student and Associate Instructor at Indiana University's Center for English Language Training, then as an ESL Instructor and Administrator at Daegu University in South Korea. Currently a PhD Candidate in Applied Linguistics from Northern Arizona University and the Director of the English Language Program at Saginaw Valley State University, her research interests include interlanguage pragmatics, assessment, curriculum development and teacher training.

## Workshop Updates

### Follow-up: Getting a Grip on Grammar III

On Saturday, May 14, 2005, Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids was the host for the third annual "Getting a Grip on Grammar" workshop presented by a team of 5 MITESOL members. More than 20 participants attended the workshop, which ran from 9:30 to 4:00 in the Gainey Conference Center on the Cornerstone campus. Jeannine Lorenger opened the workshop with a comprehensive overview of pedagogical grammar issues that teachers need to keep in mind. Judy Youngquist followed up with a helpful list of some useful grammar websites for practice and instruction, and a description of her own experience with some of these. After a delicious lunch and time for conversation, Susan Glowski demonstrated some activities to help students learn question formation, and discussed the teaching of the "future tense" in English (probing the question of whether such a tense really exists!) Carole Poleski offered teaching suggestions and a handout of sample grammar-class activities based on easily available authentic materials such as advertisements, songs, and news articles. The workshop closed with Jacquie Osborn's presentation of entertaining grammar games for a different perspective on teaching and learning. All participants enjoyed this day-long opportunity to polish their grammar teaching skills and take home a packet of practical handouts to use in the classroom. ◇

*Submitted by Carole Poleski*

### Follow-up: Technology Workshop

On Saturday April 9<sup>th</sup>, fourteen members of the CALL SIG met for a technology workshop at Michigan State University. The main part of the workshop was a crash course in webpage creation using DreamWeaver, focusing on how to create a class webpage. We also heard from Sean Anderson on how to use the MITESOL Discussion Board, and I invite anyone who has not yet used it to check it out at <http://www.mitesol.org/phpBB2/>. The discussion board is also available as a link from the "Staying in Touch" page on the MITESOL website. Lis Wilson gave a short presentation on the use of Audio Portfolios, a digital recording tool which allows students to easily record speaking assignments using a simple, user-friendly application on the internet at <http://distancelearning.llc.msu.edu/audioportfolio/>. Marta O. Dmytrenko-Ahrabian presented her multimedia project, "Voodoo", which focuses on building academic listening skills. Carol Wilson-Duffy shared her experiences with SL-Lists, (<http://distancelearning.llc.msu.edu/audioportfolio/>) a web-based discussion forum that she has successfully used in her ESL classes, and Marilyn Schlieff briefed the group on National Technology Standards and other technology issues in K-16 public schools. It was a day rich in technology and learning! ◇

*Submitted by Anne Todd*

## MITESOL Launches Affiliate-Wide Book Club

By Nigel Caplan

Although reading in our culture is generally a solitary activity, some books seem to demand dialogue. As teachers, we know that when our students discuss their reading, they can reach new levels of comprehension, response, and analysis (hence the popularity of literature circles and student book clubs). Now, we teachers have the chance to take advantage of an activity that our students enjoy: welcome to the MITESOL Book Club!

The MITESOL Book Club is an informal gathering of ESL teachers from across the state of Michigan and across the field of TESOL to share the experience of reading a great book. We will meet in person at the annual Fall conference and on-line at the [mitesol.org](http://mitesol.org) discussion board, thus becoming (we believe!) the first ever affiliate-wide book club in the international TESOL organization.

The books we will read will be loosely related to our work, but not didactic in nature, so as to welcome teachers from all settings, and provide an opportunity to bring together MITESOLers who would otherwise have little contact with each other.

We welcome recommendations for books (fiction or non-fiction, old or new) – the only requirement is that the book be readily available in paperback.

To start the club, we have chosen a book that all of us can relate to, despite probably never having experienced its context. Mark Salzman was already an acclaimed writer (*Lost in Place*; *Lying Awake*; *Iron and Silk*) when he visited Los Angeles' Central Juvenile Hall, a detention facility for teenagers awaiting sentencing for murder and other serious crimes. Although he was only looking for inspiration for a character in *Lying Awake*, Salzman was so impressed by a writing class he observed that, despite his reservations about teaching and his preconceptions about the inmates, he volunteered in Central's *Inside Out Writers* program.

Our selected text, *True Notebooks*, intersperses Salzman's witty and insightful reflections on his first years at Central with excerpts from his juvenile students' writings, which are painful, intimate, even shocking, but also honest, thoughtful and

often surprisingly well written. We meet writers who don't know they can write, led by a teacher who doesn't know he can teach. As they learn from each other, this unlikely workshop will perhaps offer us some insights into the processes of (teaching) writing.

There is much more to *True Notebooks* than just another inside-the-classroom narrative, and we hope you will join us to share your reactions to this highly-praised glimpse into an unusual but inspiring teaching situation. We're sure to have a lot to talk about!

You can participate in the book club by reading *True Notebooks* and coming to our first meeting at the Fall conference on Friday November 11. Please find us online at [www.mitesol.org](http://www.mitesol.org) (click on *Staying in Touch*, then *Discussion Boards*). ♦

**For more information**, please contact Nigel Caplan ([caplan@msu.edu](mailto:caplan@msu.edu)) or Kelly Sippell ([ksippell@umich.edu](mailto:ksippell@umich.edu))

Book Club Info (Sum/Fall 05)  
Mark Salzman, *True Notebooks*  
Paperback by *Vintage*  
ISBN 0375727612  
List price: \$13.95  
Amazon.com price: \$10.46



John De Mado will join us in  
East Lansing,  
Friday, November 11th  
at the 2005 Fall Conference.

## 2005 Fall Conference Friday Night Plenary Speaker

John De Mado has been a vocal advocate for language acquisition in the United States for many years. He has an MA degree in French language and literature from Middlebury College in Vermont. After several years of classroom teaching, John began his career in educational publishing serving as Senior National Consultant for Foreign Languages and ESL, and Marketing Manager and Editorial Director of Foreign Languages. John now owns his own company, John De Mado Language Seminars, Inc., and regularly conducts in-school professional development. John is best known for his motivational keynotes, provocative conference sessions and insightful professional and staff development workshops.

Come consider some thoughts on achieving excellence in ESL instruction, not only by learning new teaching methodology, but also through the awareness of the nature of language. ♦



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MITESOL Messages  
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