

# TESOL 2007

SPANNING THE GLOBE



## Tides of Change

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# Mitesol Messages



A publication for Michigan  
Teachers of English to  
Speakers of Other  
Languages

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### President's Corner

by Sue Dyste

#### Continuing the Vision in 2007

**Greetings!** I trust that 2007 has started off smoothly and finds you all in good health. As I was cycling the roads in Midland County a few weeks ago during our midwinter spring, I thought about what I wanted to communicate to the membership in this article. The first area I thought of was what I learned during this past year of service as President Elect; the second area—gratitude for past and current MITESOL leaders; and the final area—2007 goals.

**Reflections:** It has been just over a year since I became an official MITESOL board member, and during the course of the year, I have learned a lot.

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### A Teacher's Plug for Students Blogs

By Kurtis McDonald

Returning to Japan last spring to teach English as a Foreign Language at a School of Science and Technology after several years of studying and teaching in Michigan came as a bit of a language teaching "culture shock:". First off, the fact that the students were science and technology majors taking two years of required English courses meant that both the students' English language abilities and motivation levels were both much lower than I had been working with previously in Michigan. Secondly, unlike many teaching situations around Michigan,

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### Helping Arabic Speakers Integrate with Students from Other Cultures

By Matthew Rynbrandt

With the recent influx of Arabic students into the United States, Michigan IEP programs have seen an exponential increase in this population. This shift in population has presented teachers with a unique challenge. As we all know, Arabic students come from vastly different social and educational backgrounds from their Asian counterparts.

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## Board Talk

by Cristina Gonzalez Dekutoski

Happy New Year! I hope 2007 has gotten off to a great start for everyone. MITESOL would like welcome additions to the Executive and Advisory Board positions. See page 10 and 11 for a listing and the biographies of the new members.

We would also like to thank all of the outgoing members for their time and contributions to MITESOL. 2007 looks to be quite the promising year for MITESOL. We urge you, our members to get involved. It is through involvement and participation that our organization continues to prosper and grow

## From the Co-editors

by Carmela Gillette and Hadeel Hermiz

As Michigan has settled into its deep freeze, it has been heart-warming for us to realize what a fascinating and diverse group of scholars and educators are assembled in MITESOL. We hope that the information presented in this issue of *MITESOL Messages* will hold some appeal for everyone. A big thank you goes out to our contributors and everyone who has provided assistance to us in this, our first issue as co-editors. We would especially like to thank former co-editors Danielle Valenti and Lisa Hutchison for easing the transition and for doing such great work for the past two years. We hope we can live up to the precedent they have set. Later on, you will get a chance to meet all of the new Board Members, but we thought we'd take the opportunity to introduce ourselves here.

Carmela Gillette earned her MTESL from Arizona State University and has taught at three community colleges and two universities since doing so. She has also taught in adult education, tutoring and ESP environments. She currently teaches in EAP programs at Schoolcraft College and Madonna University.

Hadeel Hermiz earned her MA TESOL from Madonna University and has taught EAP at Oakland Community College and Madonna since graduating. She has also taught in language and culture student exchange programs for high school students. Before her TESOL career, she worked in youth development

We hope you enjoy our first edition and we welcome your suggestions for making *MITESOL Messages* more relevant and helpful for you. We will be soliciting your submissions again very soon!

## President's Corner

(Cont. from p. 1)

Maybe you are like I was and you have no idea what board members do. Frankly, when I attended my first board meeting before actually taking office, I was overwhelmed; it was as if the board members were speaking in a foreign language. Yet due to the excellent teachers on the board and their patience and support, I picked up the basics of the "MITESOL language" and started plugging away at the daunting task before me: the 2006 MITESOL Conference.

During my time as President Elect, I spent more than 500 volunteer hours working on "MITESOL stuff." I am not telling you this to win recognition (due to technology, the time I spent was probably less than previous President Elects), but to communicate the level of service your board members contribute. I can only speculate on how much time the combined board spent over the course of the past year with 17 people serving in various positions. About two weeks before the start of the 2006 MITESOL Conference, my daughter asked me, "Mom, if you had known how much work the job would be, would you have taken it?" I told her, "Yes." And today, I still say, "Yes." MITESOL is an organization that provides a very real service for ESL professionals, and I am proud to be able to serve our membership along with the other MITESOL board and advisory board members, whose commitment to MITESOL and the betterment of the organization is notable.

In the August newsletter, Carol Wilson-Duffy asked for more volunteers from our organization. I repeat her call: MITESOL needs committed professionals who can bring vision and passion to our organization. Please don't think you need to commit 500 hours; working even 10 to 15 hours during the year on one project would really make a difference. If you think you would be interested in serving your colleagues alongside a great group of people, please contact me. I would love to hear from you.

**Gratitude:** Thank you to all who participated in and presented at the 2006 MITESOL Conference held at Central Michigan University in October. Noel Woodcraft, serving as Exhibits Manager, deserves a tremendous thank you for her work with exhibitors at the 2006 Conference. We had the most exhibitors ever: 15!

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## MITESOL Advisory Board

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**President's Corner***(Cont. from p. 3)*

Thank you to Anne Todd for her leadership as the CALL SIG Representative; Carol Kubota for her leadership as Workplace and ESP SIG Representative; Heidi Vellenga for her leadership as Professional Development, Research and Teacher Resources SIG Representative; Carolyn Fike for her efforts serving as Public Relations Coordinator; Lisa Hutchison and Danielle Valentini for their work as Newsletter Editors; and Sean Anderson in his role as Communications Coordinator and Website Manager. Thank you also to John McLaughlin for his fine leadership on the Socio-Political Concerns Committee.

At the 2006 Fall Conference, we honored former MITESOL Presidents. If you happen to know any of the former Presidents, please tell them "Thank you." Former MITESOL Presidents are Carol Wilson-Duffy, Christy Pearson, Jennifer Craft, Shari Weisbaum, Maggie Phillips, Brenda Prouser Imber, Alan Headbloom, Jean Holther, Sandy Hagman, Sara Tipton, Betsy Morgan, Penny Wheeler, Barb Moten, Bruce Morgan, Nancy Schewe, Jackie Moase Burke, Liz England, Mary Lee Field, Leslie Prast, Patrick Buckheister, Cindy Gould, Laura Latulippe, Cathy Day, Marcelette Williams, Jo Ann Abersold, Barbara Moten, Joyce Zuck, Ruth Crouthamel, Charles Powell (Deceased), Sharon Grisdale, and Margret Van Naerasen.

**2007 Goals:**

**Update the Website:** The MITESOL website, which boasts a new look created by former webmaster Sean Anderson, continues to be an area that needs our focused updating efforts. Related goals include tweaking the online proposal submission and review form, created by Carol Wilson-Duffy and Vineet Bansal from MSU, and our online conference registration and membership renewal system.

**Revise the MITESOL Brochure:** Thanks to finishing touches being applied by Suzanne Haxer, our new Public Relations Coordinator, the final revisions of the MITESOL Brochure, which clearly articulate our organization's mission to new members, potential members, and educational organizations, are being completed.

**Increase Membership Involvement:** We continue to invite a MITESOL member to each of our regular board meetings to share thoughts and ideas with the board. Maggie Mielske attended the September meeting and is our new Communications Coordinator! Watch out when we invite you!

**Redistribute Conference Duties:** In an effort to reduce the task of overseeing the annual conference, we are redistributing conference duties, which have traditionally been managed by the President Elect, between the President Elect, the President, and the Past President. In addition, Carol Kubota has offered to serve on the conference committee, and we are hopeful others will be joining her.

**Publish 2006 Conference Proceedings:** One of MITESOL's major accomplishments in 2006 was the publishing of the 2005 MITESOL Conference Proceedings. Nigel Caplan, serving as Lead Editor, will be working with Christen Pearson and Carol Wilson-Duffy again this year on the upcoming publication of the Selected Proceedings of the 2006 MITESOL Conference.

**Foster Collaboration:** MITESOL will endeavor to foster collaboration with universities and community colleges that host ESL, TESOL, Linguistics, or Bi-lingual programs in the hope that our members might be invited to attend relevant professional development opportunities offered by educational institutions around the state.

*(Cont. on p. 5)***President's Corner***(Cont. from p. 4)*

Thank you to Christen Pearson, our former Past President, who served a very vital role for our organization and is continuing her service as Special Ed x ESL SIG Representative.

If your institution is hosting a professional development workshop and would be willing to extend an invitation to MITESOL members, please contact one of our board members. Though MITESOL cannot afford to underwrite workshops, we can provide some funding to support the professional development of our members. Also, Carol Wilson-Duffy has been working with the Michigan Department of Education on an exciting collaborative effort aimed at delivering educational workshops for K-12 teachers. Thank you to all who finished the K-12 online survey. Carol will be sending out an email in March describing the opportunities available.

**Continue Involvement with the ATECR:** While in the Czech Republic last May on a sidewalk café in Prague, my husband and I had the chance to meet with Sarka Jezkova, whom MITESOL had sponsored at the 2006 TESOL Conference. We enjoyed hearing her talk of her early years studying and teaching English in the former communist country of Czechoslovakia. Our sister affiliate welcomes your proposal submissions for the next ATECR conference. The Czech Republic is on a bi-annual conference system, and its next conference will be held in September 2008 in Ceske Budejovice. Watch for the call for proposals in the spring of 2008; Ceske Budejovice would be stunning in the fall! Later this year, a task force of MITESOL members interested in continuing and expanding our relationship with the ATECR will be formed.

We have a lot of work ahead of us this year, and if any of our projects sparked your interest, please join us in our continuance of the vision. If you feel up to the challenge of involvement, please contact me or one of the other board members.

The best to you all in the coming year!



Several former Presidents of MITESOL were honored for the 30th anniversary of the Organization

## A Teacher's Plug for Students Blogs

(Cont. from p. 1)

my students had nearly unlimited access to technology (every student desk in the main English rooms has a notebook computer connected to the Internet) but very little opportunity to interact using English (each class meets only once a week for 90 minutes). While these unique parameters presented unending challenges over the year, they also created opportunities to take advantage of the astounding access to technology and to capitalize on the students' overwhelming interest in it. One way that I was able to make the most of the situation was the introduction of student blogs. Blogs, or web logs, are basically online journals that can be updated through any computer with Internet access. Although I had never used student blogs in my classes before, I found my first experience with them to be quite rewarding overall, and after the initial set up, very easy to manage. While your teaching situation may be completely different, perhaps there is a way for you to take advantage of this cutting edge technique as well.

Setting up the blogs is probably the most intimidating part of using them in a course, but it really isn't that difficult. First, you have to decide which blog service you will use. Fortunately, there are a growing number of countless free blog services to choose from including well-known services like Blogger (<http://www.blogger.com>) and Yahoo! 360° (<http://360.yahoo.com>) as well as lesser known sites like Diaryland (<http://www.diaryland.com/>) and Xanga (<http://www.xanga.com>) among many others. While some of the free services like Blogger generate blogs without any commercial advertising, I chose to use Xanga, which does have minimal advertising at the top of the blogs, because it is one of the few blog services that allows you to easily create a blogring, or group of connected blogs. Xanga also allows browsing of the blogs within a blogring with the click of a button, as well as an option to browse a random blog within a blogring, something that has come in very handy for students to comment on one another's blogs and for me to quickly check to see that the blog assignments are being done on time. As far as I understand most other free blog services allow linking between blogs, but someone (namely the teacher!) will have to manually add in all of the links. For this reason, I was able to accept the minor annoyance of the advertising on Xanga in exchange for the unrivaled ease of its blogring functionality. After choosing the blog service, you have to set up the course or teacher's blog where the students will go to read the blog assignments and link up to the other students' blogs. This is done as easily as setting up a free e-mail account by simply filling out account registration information. During the account registration you will have the opportunity to name your blog and chose a style template. These details can always be changed later so keeping it simple at first is probably best. After you have completed the registration process, your blog will be active and ready for your first post. If you choose to use Xanga, you will also be able to create a blogring at this time. Since I have 2 classes working on the same blog assignments, my blog has two blogrings, one for each class. I also maintain two separate blogs, one for the first year classes (<http://www.xanga.com/KurtisMcDonald>) and one for the second year classes (<http://www.xanga.com/kmcdonald>).

Once you have the course or teacher's blog set up, then the real challenge begins...getting all of the students' blogs set up! While this does get easier the more you do it, it will take time and patience in class or extremely detailed instructions for outside class to get accomplished. I am fortunate enough to be able to walk my students through the registration process using a projection of my computer screen; it would be more difficult without this ability though.

(Cont. on p. 7)

## A Teacher's Plug for Students Blogs

(Cont. from p. 6)

While the students are setting up their blogs, it's very important that they join the blogring so that you and the other students can easily find, read and comment on their blog. You may also want to have the students bookmark the course blog URL and disable e-mail notifications from the blog service in the user settings at this time.



Once the course or teacher's blog and the student blogs are set up, you and your students are ready to get blogging. For my classes, we typically had a new blog assignment each week which the students were to complete before the next class. The blog assignments were based around a topic or a given question to which the students were to respond to with a paragraph in most cases. The topics that I chose to use were often selected simply to generate responses relatively freely (e.g. your favorite childhood memory, your favorite sport to watch, your summer vacation plans, a current event in the news, free topic, etc.) but at other times they were directly connected to course work (e.g. your cause/effect essay introduction, compare/contrast first year and second year of university, your research essay topic ideas, etc.). After posting their entries, the students were also instructed to read and comment on at least three of their classmates' blog entries each week. Because I thought of the student blogs as a kind of extensive writing with the main objective of purely getting the students writing and interacting more, I chose to grade the blogs on the effort demonstrated rather than on the particular content or mechanics. Interestingly, the blog entries often revealed patterns of common errors though, which then served to guide class discussion of certain grammar points. All in all, for being somewhat minor parts of each of my courses, the student blogs managed to generate a great deal of student writing and written interaction between students without demanding a lot of my time.

Although I did not conduct quantitative studies to verify the benefits of using student blogs, it seems that there are many qualitative advantages to using student blogs for language learning which cannot be denied. One advantage has to be ease with which students with a computer and internet access can read the latest blog assignment, compose and post their response at their own pace, and have it be immediately viewable by the other students and teacher. The fact that the other students and teacher can then instantly give feedback to the student on the same screen makes it superior in many ways to feedback on paper-based journal entries which may lag days, if not weeks, behind the date they were written. A related benefit here is that students are writing for an authentic, or at least semi-authentic, audience. Knowing that several people will be reading their work must have an impact on the seriousness with which students compose their blog entries, their incentive to be clear and intelligible, and on the meaningfulness of the exercise overall. An additional positive aspect about student blogs is that over the course of the term or terms, students are able to track their growth as writers of English. Another clear advantage to student blogs is their flexibility to include all kinds of media via uploads or links. Indeed many blogs allow the posting of pictures, documents, audio, and video, as well as links to other web sites. This flexibility creates an endless array of language learning opportunities that will just take time to discover. Finally, and perhaps, most importantly for this kind of extensive writing, the Internet and blogs are familiar and well-liked by many students. Many students are proficient bloggers in their native language and are eager to try their hand at blogging in English.

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## Helping Arabic Speakers Integrate with Students from Other Cultures

(Cont. from p. 1)

At times, this can create misunderstandings between our students. This article will examine three, practical ways to foster understanding between our Arabic students and their peers.



1. Educate, educate, educate! A good first step is to have your Arabic students introduce themselves (perhaps in the opening days' ice-breaker activities), and let the other students ask questions of them. Of course, you can expect the stereotypes about our Arabic students to come out at this stage ("Mohammed, will you have four wives someday?"), but that is the point! Letting our students work through these stereotypes on their own will facilitate familiarity which, in turn, will lead to understanding. In the same way, we need to encourage our Arabic students to know and accept their non-Arabic classmates. There is a propensity for Arabic students to congregate together; perhaps even more so than other cultures, given the familial-like culture in the Middle East. These groups of boisterous Arab men can seem impenetrable to our non-Arabic populations. How can we facilitate more open dialogue between our students? A cultural exchange at the beginning of each term is a great way to help our students understand each other. This could be done as a center-wide activity (with break down times for classes to process the information), or teachers could individually arrange this as an extended ice-breaker activity. Regardless of the venue, information could be presented on each of the center's (or classroom's) populations. The topics discussed could include learning styles, cultural backgrounds, gender roles, and communication styles, to name a few.

2. Encourage openness. Allowing your students to voice their frustrations and concerns is always a good idea; much more so in this, sometimes sensitive, situation. One of the worst classroom issues to have happen is for there to be a polarization of Arabic students, perceived or real. In this unique time of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, teachers need to play a more mediatory role in the classroom. This relates to point number one. If we can refer back to the cultural education that we have provided them, it should help to foster understanding between our students.

3. Take the time to connect. International students (and particularly Arabic students) thrive when they can sense that a teacher's concern runs deeper than whether they achieve good grades in their classes. Although it is easy to get caught up in the daily grind of teaching, it is imperative that we take the opportunity to ask how our students are adjusting to our vastly different culture. If we do this, when the students are frustrated by their classmates, they will feel comfortable sharing this with their teacher. Being able to prevent issues in the classroom before they become explosive is crucial to an effective learning environment.

The changing dynamic of today's ESL classroom is a challenge for us all. Adapting our programs and providing support for teachers who are addressing these challenges is crucial to having an ESL program that is up-to-date and ready to deal with the shifting face of ESL education in the United States.

## A Glance Behind the Scenes of MITESOL's Finances

by Ildi Porter-Szucs (formerly Thomas)

A happy new year to all MITESOL colleagues! I'd like to take this opportunity to cast some light on the arcane and mysterious financial workings of our organization. For the first time, our annual income exceeded the magic \$25,000 mark, which meant mandatory tax reporting to the Internal Revenue Service. This was easier said than done because none of our internal MITESOL categories matched those required by the IRS. Just to give one example, our internal bookkeeping records indicated that an Executive Board member spent \$15.00 at Staples, for which she was reimbursed, while the IRS wanted to know how much in a year was spent on office supplies, on the one hand, vs. printing and reproduction, on the other. So as to avoid future frustrations and guesswork, with the helpful advice and shepherding of an accountant, we switched from ordinary money management software to an accounting program especially designed for nonprofit organizations like MITESOL. This conversion took place over several months last summer. It entailed encoding each and every financial transaction according to categories that make sense both to the IRS and ESL professionals. Come next tax season, we'll find out how successful our efforts were!

Another obscure aspect of our financial management involves the planning and organizing of our quality—yet affordable—fall conference. With each year, in response to attendee feedback, the organizers of the conference make improvements such as a better conference site, more and tastier food, more sessions overall, a larger publisher presence, a networking room with snacks and musical entertainment, online registration for the first time, etc. All these improvements have cost ramifications and the art is in finding a way to avoid having to raise either membership fees or conference registration fees to cover the ever-increasing costs. The organizers pay special attention to keeping the conference affordable to part-time members – that is students, adjunct instructors, paraprofessionals and retired professionals. For instance, the cost of the 2006 conference was \$56.64 per attendee but the part-time registration fee was \$50.00 per person. Even with the support of publishers, which brought the per person cost down to \$52.20, the attendance of part-timers was subsidized by their full-time colleagues.

All in all, I am happy to report that the financial state of the organization is strong! We have enough money for necessary expenses (such as purchasing accounting software and seeking the advice of an accountant) and for quality improvement projects (such as online registration, but I could have mentioned our new, more user-friendly website). Now all we need is for more adventuresome ESL professionals to step forward and be willing to spend the couple hours a week it takes to learn about what takes place behind the scenes – be it in the financial sphere or any other!

### Michigan Presenters at TESOL 2007 in Seattle

- On Friday, 3/23 at 9:30 am in the Chinook room of the Hyatt hotel, Ildi Porter-Szucs (formerly Ildi Thomas) will be giving presentation #3413 entitled: Interpreting the Voices of Recent TESOL Graduates, which is based on her doctoral dissertation.
- On Saturday, 3/24 at 3:00 pm in room 204 of the Convention Center, Shari Weisbaum, Kathy Reilly, and Ildi Porter-Szucs (formerly Ildi Thomas) will be presenting on Easy Prep Activities that Increase Oral Fluency.



## 2006-2007 New MITESOL Leadership

**Mimi Doyle** is currently an instructor in the English Language Institute (ELI) at Central Michigan University, and the SIG leader for Professional Development, Teacher Resources & Research for MITESOL. She has previously taught in the ESL program at Ferris State University where she also taught French and Japanese. Prior to her academic career, Mimi taught French at the Daewoo Corporation, and at Sang Ah Top Language Institute, both are located in Seoul, South Korea. She earned a MA, in French Language and Literature, at Sung Shin Women's University in Seoul, South Korea, and she is presently working toward a MA, in the TESOL program, at Central Michigan University. Mimi speaks English, French, and Korean fluently.



**Maggie Mieske** is a graduate assistant instructor in the English Language Institute at Central Michigan University. She is also a student in the MITESOL program. She enjoys competing with her Arabian stallion in 50 and 100 mile endurance rides, teaching English as a Second Language, researching languages and cultures, traveling, writing poetry and being a (young) grandmother. Maggie is presently MITESOL's Communications Coordinator, contributing to the newsletter, website, and many other smaller tasks that help us get information out to you!



**Kristin Ekkens** is the Customized Workplace English (CWE) Director at the Kent County Literacy Council, a non-profit organization in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Kristin has worked with the Literacy Council for over four years, serving as an Americorps VISTA volunteer, as the CWE program coordinator, and for the past two years as program director. Kristin will be completing her MA TESOL from Michigan State University in June 2007. Her ESL/EFL teaching experience includes workplace English, ESL for migrant workers, on-to-one ESL Adult tutoring, and EFL in Costa Rica. Between writing her MA thesis, selling Workplace English classes to businesses, and traveling, Kristin enjoys serving as the Workplace ESL SIG leader.



**Suzanne Haxer** is currently teaching middle school English Language Learners in the Bloomfield Hills School District. Her interest in working with ESL students began with her first teaching job in a private Islamic Academy and only grew stronger when she served as a Peace Corps Volunteer teacher in Belize, Central America. Upon returning to the United States, Suzanne taught ESL and Language Arts for four years to middle school students in Phoenix, Arizona. In 2004, she received a Master's of Bilingual/Multicultural Education from Northern Arizona University, where she graduated with distinction. At present, Suzanne continues to advocate for high quality ESL education in Michigan by working on the Oakland County ESL Leadership team, and serving as the Public Relations Officer for MITESOL.



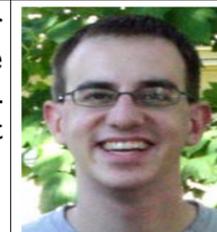
**Lisa Hutchison**, a secondary ESL teacher at Southfield-Lathrup High School, has also taught ESL in adult education and ESP programs in the state. Her experience in community college and university teaching includes courses at Oakland Community College, Henry Ford Community College, Eastern Michigan University and the University of Michigan. Before earning her MA in TESOL at EMU in 2003, she lived and taught in Cameroon, West Africa for two years. Her involvement in MITESOL includes serving as newsletter co-editor and conference presenter, and in TESOL as conference volunteer and presenter in the Graduate Student Forum, which she helped coordinate in 2003. She is a member of Oakland County's ESL/Bilingual Leadership Committee, which combines research and the development of teacher-training workshops. Lisa is currently serving as President Elect and Conference Chair for MITESOL.



**Angela Predhomme** got her MA in TESOL from Eastern Michigan University in 2005. Formerly a graphic designer, she changed careers in order to connect with people and help them learn a practical, valuable skill. Angela has brought this creativity and energy into her adjunct work at Wayne State University, The University of Michigan, and Michigan State University. Presently the leader of the CALL SIG, Angela is excited to be putting together a well-rounded overview of practical CALL resources for a presentation at the fall MITESOL conference.



**Scott Riggs** is the Curricula Coordinator at Language Center International, an IEP in Southfield, MI. In the past, he taught at the University of Detroit Mercy and served for two years as the ESL coordinator for the Catholic elementary schools in Detroit. Scott heads the Socio-Political Concerns Taskforce for MITESOL.



## Exhibitors Make Conference Raffle a Huge Success – Let's Thank Them

by Noel Woodcraft

The raffle has always been a finishing highlight to our conference. Excitement fills the air as a name is called. Over the past few years, the exhibitors and some publishers that have not been able to attend have been so generous in their donations that we have been able to send almost everyone attending the raffle home with a raffle prize. This past conference witnessed our biggest success with fifteen different exhibitors donating items, and two others who could not be in attendance sending a box of books for the raffle in support of MITESOL. Consequently, many conference attendees went home with two prizes; some of those were complete packages compiled for a specific ESL level or SIG area teacher. Our exhibitors not only donate very generously to our raffle and give away a lot of publications free to our members during the conference, but they also pay to attend our conference which helps in keeping our attendance costs from a substantial increase. Their outstanding support of MITESOL is phenomenal. Although the exhibits manager takes care of sending out personalized thank you notes to the representatives and their companies, you can let the exhibitors know how much you appreciate their attendance and help at the MITESOL conference. Send an email to a representative that helped, informed, or guided you in finding what you were searching for. Let the representatives know that MITESOL members appreciate their attendance and support at the conference and throughout the year. The exhibitors made the raffle a huge success, so let's thank them in a big way!

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 McGraw Hill: Mike Bennett – [mike\\_bennett@mcgraw-hill.com](mailto:mike_bennett@mcgraw-hill.com)  
 Oxford University Press: Kathy Krokhar – [kathleen.drokar@oup.com](mailto:kathleen.drokar@oup.com)  
 Pearson Longman ESL: The new Michigan Rep. is Natalie Cornelison – [Natalie.cornelison@pearsoned.com](mailto:Natalie.cornelison@pearsoned.com)  
 Pro Lingua Associates: Raymond Clark – [ray@ProLinguaAssociates.com](mailto:ray@ProLinguaAssociates.com)  
 Rosetta Stone: Andrew Berrafato – [aberrafato@RosettaStone.com](mailto:aberrafato@RosettaStone.com)  
 Santillana USA: Ken Schepers – [ken@scheperseducation.com](mailto:ken@scheperseducation.com)  
 Sundance Publishing: Beverly Norrell – [bnorrell@sundancepub.com](mailto:bnorrell@sundancepub.com)  
 Thomson Heinle: Rita Sacks – [rita.sacks@thomson.com](mailto:rita.sacks@thomson.com)  
 University of Michigan Press: Lauren Naimola – [lnaimola@umich.edu](mailto:lnaimola@umich.edu)

MITESOLers enjoyed previewing the latest materials from some of the fields top publishers.



## Fishing for the American Audience

by Susan Ruellan

At the beginning of the week a very young writer came to me to recount what he had learned from his 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. He told me, "Mrs. Shields said that if you teach a boy to fish, he will eat for a lifetime. If you give him a fish, he will only eat for a day." I didn't know it at the time, but this proverb would follow me throughout the week and so aptly apply to my work as an ESL composition teacher and tutor to students with whom I work as supervisor of a writing lab for second-language writers.

At a university in Michigan, I teach an EAP writing course in which students learn how to write a research paper and integrate secondary sources. It is a very challenging course for L2 writers; many students struggle with it and some consider withdrawing by midterm. Despite its difficulties, most students complete it successfully and go on to take content courses in which they will write many more research papers.

In a writing conference with a university student that week, the student stated that this course was one of the most useful courses he had taken in the ESL program because he could see that he would be using the skills he was learning. During our conversation however, he talked about the problems he was encountering from finding sources and reading to writing summaries and paraphrases. Because the process involved was long, complicated, and sometimes frustrating, the student considered finding short cuts to simplify the process including weak paraphrases, or cutting and pasting text, which would only lead to plagiarism.

My mind returned to the younger writer who had spoken to me earlier in the week, and so I invited my university student to "go fishing." Learning how to fish, I explained, was not easy. It has quiet, sometimes lonely moments. Learning how to fish can be frustrating, too, especially when you don't catch what you are looking for or you don't catch anything at all. However, when you figure out which lake is plentiful, how to cast your line, and later how to prepare a delicious meal, you can feast and even share your catch with others. On the other hand, if a student doesn't learn how to fish, he might only eat for a day by copying someone's paper or by stealing his neighbor's fish. I asked him to consider what would be the best way to write his research papers throughout the semester.

Later that week in the ESL Writing Lab, an L2 student came to me to discuss an essay he was preparing for a speech he would give. He explained that he was struggling with the concept of the introduction and finding a good "hook" to capture the reader's attention. He was finding writing for an American audience more difficult than he had anticipated.

As soon as he mentioned the hook, my thoughts returned to fishing, of course. He had great ideas in the body of his composition and he was a good writer, but the hook in his introduction was posing him problems. I reassured him that he wrote well, but I explained that perhaps in the Great Lakes of American writing, he may be unfamiliar with the species of fish he was trying to attract. Moreover, he may be used to fishing with a net, an arrow, or a harpoon, yet, in American waters, the fish are waiting to see a hook with a different kind of bait. As a result, we talked about different techniques to introduce a thesis, and the rhetorical patterns of the American essay. When he left, like his ESL colleague with whom I had talked earlier in the week, he felt better prepared to go fishing for an American audience.

## ATECR and MITESOL Partnership

By Šárka Ježková

The ATECR is a TESOL Affiliate thanks to the long-lasting partnership with MITESOL. As the President of the Association of Teachers of the Czech Republic, I had an opportunity to represent the association at the 40th Annual TESOL Convention in Tampa, Florida. Being the official representative of the ATECR, I participated in the whole TESOL affiliate program, where I found lots of inspiring and useful ideas.

An affiliate colloquium with the title "Policy to Practice: From Decision-Makers to Classroom Practitioner" discussed the issue of changing demands on educational systems worldwide. Representatives of TESOL affiliates from four regions explored the challenges and opportunities encountered in the process of implementing educational reform in their areas. A colloquium moderated by Elke Apelbaum Savoy, the New York City Department of Education, started with presentations on implementing various educational reforms in five countries: Chile, Haiti, Qatar, Senegal and Thailand. During the discussion, experiences were shared and it was really eye-opening how many common features of reform implementation we could find.

At the Affiliate Assembly Meeting representatives dialogued and shared professional issues. TESOL's President and Standing Committee chairs updated the affiliate representatives on new developments. Discussion Questions included: How could TESOL effectively respond to professional issues? How could TESOL influence, empower and support English language related issues in a non-English speaking environment? etc. The participation of the ATECR official representative in the Affiliate Assembly ensured that the association maintained the status of TESOL affiliate. As a member of the TESOL community, ATECR will have access to current information and discussion forums.

In addition to the affiliate program at the TESOL Convention, I was very glad to have attended many workshops, paper presentations and discussion group sessions, including those delivered by such renowned experts as Michael McCarthy, Kathleen Graves or Donald Freeman. Overall the program was professionally stimulating and very enriching. Several discussions revealed common issues faced by all TESOL professionals. I had an opportunity to get current information about hot issues, which I will share with my colleagues at home.

I am very grateful I had the chance to attend such a big event. My visit took place thanks to the generous support provided by our partner organization, MITESOL, and the U. S. Embassy in Prague. ATECR would like to thank both for enabling the association to remain a member of the world TESOL community.

All the activities helped ATECR to promote cooperation with TESOL and other affiliate organizations. The numerous meetings with current and former members of the executive board of MITESOL provided a platform for preparing new ways of collaboration between MITESOL and ATECR.

I would like to express my gratitude to Sandra Hagman, President of Intercultural Training Associates for her warm welcome, for advising me about the whole event, and for guiding me not only through the convention but also around Tampa. I hope I will be able to repay her when she comes to the Czech Republic.

*(Cont. on p. 15)*

## ATECR and MITESOL Partnership

*(Cont. from p. 14)*

I would also like to show my appreciation for the support provided by Ildi Porter-Szucs and Carol Wilson-Duffy. We prepared a design for a new joint project. The project would involve MITESOL and ATECR members, would incorporate blended learning principles and would be focused on intercultural differences and understanding, so vital in our current world. We are sure that working on such projects will intensify our cooperation, establish stronger links and result in the mutual benefit of both communities.

I am very pleased I had an opportunity to participate in TESOL 2006, to meet MITESOL representatives and to establish personal relationships. I believe that we will promote our partnership in the future, beginning with inviting a MITESOL representative to our bi-annual international conference. See you in the Czech Republic.

## A Teacher's Plug for Students Blogs

*(Cont. from p. 7)*

While I feel that I have learned a lot about using student blogs through my experiences with my classes in Japan, perhaps the most exciting part about blogs for language learning is that they have an ever-expanding potential. One idea with a lot of promise is to have classes here collaborate with other ESL/EFL students, native English speakers studying Japanese, or TESOL/Applied Linguistics students in other parts of the world. By increasing the authenticity of the audience and creating real opportunities for meaningful written communication, the bloggers on both sides would stand to benefit immensely. If any MITESOL members and their classes are interested in attempting such collaboration, please contact me at [kmcdonald@ksc.kwansei.ac.jp](mailto:kmcdonald@ksc.kwansei.ac.jp). I am eager to hear from you!

## Calendar of Events 2007

### ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages)

ACTFL Convention & Exposition  
November 15 - 18, 2007  
[www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org)

### International Reading Association

May 13 - 17, 2007  
Toronto, CA  
[www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)

### MABE (Michigan Association of Bilingual Education)

May 3 and 4, 2007  
Grand Rapids  
[www.mabemi.org](http://www.mabemi.org)

### MAFSA (Michigan Association for Foreign Student Affairs)

March 21-23, 2007  
Bay City  
[www.oiss.wayne.edu/MAIE](http://www.oiss.wayne.edu/MAIE)

### Michigan Adult Education Professional Development (MAEPD)

March 26-28, 2007  
[www.maepd.org](http://www.maepd.org)

### Michigan Reading Association

March 10-12, 2007  
Grand Rapids  
[www.michiganreading.org](http://www.michiganreading.org)

Please submit additional conference dates and information to Rita Krause at [rkrause2@troy.k12.mi.us](mailto:rkrause2@troy.k12.mi.us). Please put "CONFERENCE INFORMATION" in the subject line.

## SIG Updates

### Professional Development SIG Report

By Mimi Doyle

The revitalized Professional Development SIG decided to start a focused database of workshop needs & possible presenters on a variety of ESL-related topics. One of the needs presented itself at the SIG meeting that occurred during the 2006 Fall Conference. Jeri Manning, the International Student Coordinator and only ESL teacher at Cranbrook Schools at Bloomfield Hills, asked for information on classroom teachers relating to Korean ESL students. Thus, Heidi Vellenga, the SIG leader from 2003 to 2006, and I have scheduled a workshop for staff on the topic of working with Korean ESL students on March 6, 2007.

Those not attending the national TESOL conference in Seattle this year should consider the MAIE (Michigan Association of International Educators) conference in Bay City, scheduled for March 21-23. More information can be found at <http://www.oiss.wayne.edu/MAIE/index.htm>. It's a great opportunity to meet other international educators here in Michigan.

Also, MABE (Michigan Association of Bilingual Educators) Institute 2007 Conference will be held Thursday, May 3 and Friday, May 4, 2007 in the Crown Plaza in Grand Rapids.

I would welcome information on already scheduled conferences & workshops, suggestions on workshops that you'd like to see offered, and volunteers to be presenters. Please send your suggestions to Mimi Doyle at [doyle1m@cmich.edu](mailto:doyle1m@cmich.edu).

### CALL SIG Report

By Angela Predhomme

Computer aided language learning has a vast range of applications, intriguing the "techie" types with professional opportunities from advanced web design to assisting teachers with simple things such as email, and Microsoft Word.

At the 2007 fall conference, the CALL SIG will be presenting an overview of several practical applications and resources. Possible topics to date include internet resources, multimedia, online forums for the support of international students, online translation, and recording with the computer for pronunciation work.

If there is a computer topic that you would like to see covered in this presentation, please send an email to [apredhomme@chartermi.net](mailto:apredhomme@chartermi.net) and your idea will be considered for inclusion in the CALL presentation at the 2007 fall conference.

## SIG Updates

### K-12 SIG Update

By Lisa Hutchison

Following are some key dates and professional development opportunities for K-12 educators.

#### **2007 ELPA ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

- Kindergarten is separate stand-alone Level I test including only speaking and listening
- Note that there are again multiple forms for each level of ELPA
- MDE does NOT require testing of FLEP students, IF they were NOT counted in fall 2006 SRSD
- Any ELL in the SRSD in fall 2006 MUST be tested.

Check [www.Michigan.gov/oeaa](http://www.Michigan.gov/oeaa) for further updates.

#### **Spring 2007 ELPA Key Dates**

##### **February 15, 2007**

"Administering the Spring 2007 ELPA" MDE teleconference

- Broadcast through Wayne RESA and participating ISDs.
- Available for streamed download though MIStream.net

**March 5, 2007** ELPA materials arrive in schools

**March 19 – April 27, 2007** Testing Window

**May 4, 2007** Deadline for return of testing materials to Harcourt

#### **2007 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

**MDE – Office of School Improvement** – Look professional development opportunities through your local ISDs beginning June 18, 2007. Check [mitesol.org](http://mitesol.org) for updates.

**For more information on the following items (and to register online) contact Oakland Schools, Waterford at [www.oaklandk12.mi.us](http://www.oaklandk12.mi.us)**

#### **Dr. Samuel Ortiz, Ph.D., St. John's University: Understanding Struggling English Learners: Assessment and Interventions**

**March 13, 2007**

Participants will plan assessment procedures appropriate for the evaluation of and academic intervention for ELLs. Child-study teams of ESL and special education staff are encouraged to attend.

#### **Teaching Academic Content to ELLs:**

**Elementary: March 27, 2007**

**Secondary: April 19, 2007**

These workshops are designed to demonstrate how general education teachers can modify existing units of study for ELLs. Please encourage your general education colleagues to attend.

Please submit additional conference dates to Rita Krause at [rkrause2@troj.k12.mi.us](mailto:rkrause2@troj.k12.mi.us). Please put "CONFERENCE INFORMATION" in the subject line.

## SIG Updates

**Semantic Naming Generalization, Voice Disorder Perception, Grammatical Discriminant Accuracy, Phonological Abilities & Cochlear Implants – Huh???**

By Christen M. Pearson, PhD

Those of us who work on either a regular or occasional basis with ESL learners facing additional language challenges are often frustrated by the lack of readily available information that is understandable to an educated lay (non-medical) audience. Thus, we are often left with the somewhat daunting task of 1) interpreting the existing research, 2) determining the potential implications for our learners, and 3) applying the results of studies in a trial and error approach (similar to action research) in our own classrooms. The purpose of this brief article is to take four studies involving ESL or non-English speakers, reported during the past six months in the *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, and condense them into a readable format for ESL teachers. It is then left up to each individual reader to consider the studies' implications and apply the findings to their own learners and teaching situations.

The four studies presented here address both children and adults, as well as speech/language production and attitudinal perception. The two studies involving adults will be presented first, followed by the studies on children. Complete reference information can be found at the end of this article for those interested in reading the full studies.

When working with those who are bilingual, the two languages often interact with each other, making it sometimes difficult to determine where the problem is located. Edmonds and Kiran (2006) explore one aspect of this in their study of three English-Spanish bilingual adults (ages 53-56) with aphasia. Bilingual aphasia is the loss of one or both languages when the language-dominant hemisphere of the brain has been damaged. This type of damage is often the result of stroke or other traumatic brain injury such as experienced in an accident. When treatment is initiated, it is often the dominant language that is focused upon, with the hopes that whatever is gained in the dominant language will then transfer over (generalize) to the less dominant language. However, Edmonds and Kiran's study indicates that this may not be the best protocol to follow for all individuals. Their findings suggest that in balanced bilinguals, lexical (vocabulary) and semantic (meaning) training in either language leads to generalization to the other language because of the strong connections between the two languages in the brain. However, for those who have a dominant language, it appears that therapy using the less dominant language, though counterintuitive, increases transfer of knowledge to the dominant language more easily than the reverse. Edmonds and Kiran's study must be regarded with caution due to the very small number of participants in their study, but it does have implications for how therapy is determined for aphasic bilinguals. A question that arises in my mind is whether this line of work has any implications for bilingual children who also have language impairments. If so, we must question whether intervention and support services, by the school speech-language pathologist, ESL specialist, and/or classroom teacher, are best provided in the dominant or non-dominant language. It will also be important to remember that in young learners, language dominance can shift over a relatively short period of time, another issue to keep in mind at the yearly IEP meetings.

(cont. on p. 19)

## SIG Updates

(Cont. from p. 18)

A second recently reported study involving bilingual adults is that of Altenberg & Ferrand (2006) who investigated the attitudes/perception of monolingual English, bilingual Russian-English, and bilingual Cantonese-English speakers when presented with recordings of speakers with mild, moderate, severe or no voice disorders. This was a larger study than Edmonds and Kiran's, involving 30 older and 29 younger women, across the three language groups, listening to a total of 10 female voices. Each participant rated the recorded voices on 21 attributes, such as *friendly, ugly, stable, incompetent, and uneducated*. The study found that as the degree of speech disorder increased in severity in the recorded voice, the perception of the individual associated with the recorded voice became increasingly negative. In other words, a speaker's character was being judged in part based on whether the person had a disorder and the severity of the disorder. This is not unlike earlier studies showing such biased perceptions based on ethnicity. Though the age of the listeners was not a factor, the language background of the listeners was. Cantonese-English bilinguals were more negative in their perceptions of those with severe speech disorders than were listeners in the other groups. Altenberg & Ferrand conclude that these perceptions need to be addressed in the clinical setting, especially as to what areas of intervention are prioritized. For those of us in the educational setting, this study raises questions as to how our ESL language and/or speech impaired learners are perceived by their peers, which often leads directly to how the learners are treated by the peers. Additionally, we must also ask how our ESL learners in general are perceived by monolingual peers and what we can do as educators to make sure that no student is marginalized for any reason.

Shifting to two studies involving children, Guitierrez-Clellen, Restrepo, and Simon-Cerejido (2006) looked at whether a grammatical assessment measure could accurately differentiate normal and language-impaired bilingual children. A view exists that exposure to English (a language with minimal inflectional endings) negatively affects a child's L1 grammatical accuracy, in this case, those speaking Spanish (a more highly inflected language). This is an important area to study because if a child is having difficulty learning English, the child's L1 will then be assessed in order to determine difference vs. disability. If the child's L1 was normal prior to the exposure to English, but it is their current L1 ability being assessed, a potential exists for the child to be misdiagnosed. Guitierrez-Clellen et al. studied 160 children, 80 normal and 80 language impaired, living in four geographical areas (important in order not to let dialect bias the results). They found that the grammatical assessment measure was fair to good in discriminating between normal and language disordered children aged 4;0 (four years, zero months) through 5;1 and good in those aged 5;2 – 5;11. The measure did not perform well with children aged 6;0 and older. The research group concludes that this type of measure is useful for Spanish dominant or Spanish-only children aged 4-6 years. The entire study of grammatical morphemes and language impairment is very promising for both monolingual and bilingual children and should be shared with school speech-language pathologists.

(Cont. on p. 20)

## SIG Updates

(Cont. from p. 19)

Finally, Law & So (2006) have explored phonological abilities, using picture-naming and story retelling, in two groups of Cantonese-speaking children aged 5;1 to 6;4. All of the children had been profoundly deaf, in both ears, prior to the acquisition of language. By the time of the study, seven of the children were using hearing aids and seven had cochlear implants. Law and So found that both groups of children were able to articulate and use phonological (sound) patterns in the same way with vowels and with tones (Cantonese being a tonal language). However, there were differences found in the children's ability to use consonants, with correct articulation being much higher in the group of children with cochlear implants. Therefore, Law and So conclude that the use of cochlear implants shows more promise in supporting the articulation ability of consonants than do hearing aids, yet note that future study with cochlear implants should focus on optimizing performance of the articulation of vowels. As more studies are conducted on cochlear implants in children, perhaps we will discover the effects of this technology on the speech and language patterns of hearing impaired bilingual children. It is certainly a complex situation, especially as a child comes of school age. We need to be prepared.

With this in mind – the need to be prepared – it is hoped that this cursory overview of the above four studies has provided something of interest, something thought-provoking, to the reader, whether or not speech/language/hearing impaired learners are currently in the classroom. To this end—of being prepared—please feel free to pass on and share any information that you come across so that it might then be distributed to others. MITESOL's ESL x Special Education SIG is one way to do this.



## References

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- Law, Z. W. Y. & So, L. K. H. (2006). Phonological abilities of hearing-impaired Cantonese-speaking children with cochlear implants or hearing aids. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 49*(6), 1342-1353.

## TESOL 2007 Seattle MITESOL Reception

By Carol Wilson-Duffy



Once again the MITESOL'ers attending the TESOL annual conference are welcome to join us for our annual MITESOL reception. This will be a great time to relax and unwind during the busy, busy, conference! The reception will be held on Thursday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5:00-7:30 pm. at a Thai restaurant rightly named Typhoon! The chef, Bo Kline, has been applauded by *Bon Appétit* as "one of the hottest chefs in America," so the food should be as great as the company!

Many of you probably already know that Seattle is quite an expensive convention location, but this year, a number of schools and a publishing company are helping us sponsor our reception, which has really lessened our financial burden and made it possible for us to host a wonderful dinner. The menu of vegetarian spring rolls, salad rolls, chicken satay, vegetable phad thai, green curry and tofu, rice, tea, and coconut ice cream makes my mouth water. I can't wait, and I hope you can't wait either! Thanks so much to Central Michigan University, Michigan State University, Oakland Community College ESL Program, The University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, and Pearson-Longman for their contributions and continued support!

**Location:** Typhoon is less than a mile from the convention center at 1400 Western Ave, and for more information about the restaurant and its location, please visit: <http://www.typhoonrestaurants.com/welcome.htm>

**RSVP:** If you are planning on attending, please email Carol Wilson-Duffy at [wilson77@msu.edu](mailto:wilson77@msu.edu).



## Fall Conference Information

By Lisa Hutchison

### Making Connections: MITESOL 2007

Friday, October 19 – Saturday, October 20, 2007  
EMU Student Center, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti

Call for Proposals: On-line submissions only will be accepted  
Available March 28 – Deadline: July 1, 2007  
Workshops & Poster Sessions are encouraged for submission

Encourage a colleague to attend by registering a  
Teaching Buddy for special registration rates

Questions? Want to volunteer? Contact Lisa Hutchison [hutchisonlm@southfield.k12.mi.us](mailto:hutchisonlm@southfield.k12.mi.us)

Hotel Accommodations – Ask for MITESOL rates



BY CHOICE HOTELS

Comfort Inn

Reservations 1-800-973-6101 / (734) 973-6100  
2455 Carpenter Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48108  
Located just off Washtenaw Road and US-23  
<http://www.comfortinnannarbor.com/>



Ann Arbor Ypsilanti at Eagle Crest  
Reservations 1-800-228-9290 / (734) 487-2000  
1275 South Huron Street  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
Located on South Huron Street just south of I-94  
<http://marriott.com/property/propertypage/DTWYS>

[www.mitesol.org](http://www.mitesol.org) – Click on 2007 Conference

## Memories of the Fall 2006 Conference



Professor Cathy Day and several EMU alumni gathered to share memories.

Conference Chair Sue Dyste enjoys a minute with some of the many international students from CMU who volunteered at the Conference. They served as wonderful hosts!



Calvin College undergraduate students in TESOL programs enjoyed one of their first professional conferences.