



MITESOL Conference Update~October 9th & 10th

In less than two months we will be greeting old friends and meeting new colleagues at the annual MITESOL conference. Grand Rapids is a lovely city in the fall, and our conference location, GVSU's Eberhard Center, provides a breathtaking view of the Grand River. This year's theme of "Transforming Learning: Teaching and Advocacy" provides the backdrop for a week-

end of new knowledge, conversation, and inspiration. We invite you to approach this year's conference with a spirit of inquiry and reflection—make connections with others, attend a session on an unfamiliar topic, and consider how to re-energize your own practice as a TESOL professional.

Our keynote speaker this year is Dr. Donald Freeman from the University of Michigan and

our plenary speakers are Susan Reed, an attorney with the Michigan Immigration Rights Project and Michigan Poverty Law Project, and Dr. Nkechye Ezech, Assistant Professor of Education with Aquinas College.

To register and find additional information on the 2009 MITESOL conference, please visit the MITESOL website. ~Casey Gordon, President Elect and Conference Chair

President's Corner

As you are enjoying the lovely Michigan weather and hopefully doing some relaxing, I would like to encourage you to think about becoming a more active member in our organization. We will have several board positions that are in need of passionate members.

President-elect (3 year position): The President-Elect will serve as a member of the Executive Committee and as chairperson of the Conference Program Committee, and will fulfill such other duties as are assigned to him/her by the Executive Committee, President, and/or the Assembly.

Communications Coordinator (2 year position): The Communications Coordinator is responsible for general communication among MITESOL members. He/She will oversee the publication of the newsletter, the web site,

and the e-mail list, all of which are intended to facilitate communication between the Board and the membership as well as among the membership. He/She is also responsible for public relations, i.e. publicizing MITESOL's professional activities. In order to do this, he/she will maintain frequent contact with the communication committee.

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From the Co-Editors

The fall always has educators looking towards new beginnings and fresh starts. In this edition of *MITESOL Messages* we hope to inspire using the theme of “connections”. Of course, readers will find information in this issue about how to connect with colleagues during the MITESOL 2009 conference, but also they’ll learn about joining a social networking site just for teachers. In addition, as language teachers we are always looking for ways to connect our learners



Fall always has educators looking towards new beginnings and fresh starts. How will you connect with others during the coming season?

with American culture, while accepting our students’ varied heritages. In this regard, readers will find interesting information in “The Value of Understanding Your Stu-

dents’ Linguistic Heritages” and “Connecting with a Career: Résumé Building While In Michigan”. Also, “Connecting Reading and Writing Through Spelling Lists” presents some great ideas on how to reach students by connecting curriculums. We hope that this edition will have something for everyone and help you to re-energize as you get ready for the new school year ahead!

Marian Woyciehowicz Gonsior & Valerie Weeks, Newsletter Co-Editors

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Connecting Reading and Writing Through Spelling Lists: A Whole Language Approach

No one teaching English to adult learners would deny the importance of spelling lessons. Many adult education ESL teachers encounter students who need help writing a letter or filling out a form or report. Learning to spell commonly used words with unusual spelling patterns (e.g., “because”) helps students achieve one facet of writing skill. Other students may express an interest in English orthography, especially if they encounter new spelling at odds with their understanding of English phonics. These learners, too, welcome spelling practice to gain skills in the new language.

Phonics, through focus on sound-grapheme patterns, is one way to teach the spelling of English vocabulary. Additionally, a *whole language* approach highlights vocabulary in the context of authentic, relevant meaning. Although descriptions of whole language vary, one view is aspects of language use – grammar, semantics, pragmatics – studied from a single text, for example, a story or article. Another view is integrated language activi-

ties, such as linked reading and writing. For adult second language learners, an approach of this nature corresponds to *communicative language teaching*, in which meaning-



ful language (versus drills and lists) aids comprehension and learning. In the past two years of teaching ESL in adult education, I’ve developed a technique for spelling practice based on a whole language approach involving contextualized reading and writing practice.

Each week, before students connected activities in reading and writing through spelling lists, we had what might be called “traditional” spelling practice. Weekly lists were usually ten

words, but sometimes included multiple grammar categories, for instance the terms *health* and *healthy*, in which case the list had more than ten words. At the beginning of the week, students copied the spelling words into their notebooks and looked up meaning and grammar category in their dictionaries. When more than one definition was listed, the students and I came to a consensus on which meaning to focus on for the week. Students also pronounced the words before and after writing notes, repeating each word after me in unison. Multisyllabic words were pronounced one sound unit at a time, sometimes starting at the word’s end or middle and then reinforcing the left to right order. After these activities, students could practice spelling the words outside of class any way they wished, although we continued to pronounce the words in class at least once a day.

To contextualize the spelling list in reading and writing practice,

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President’s Corner

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Membership Development Coordinator (2 year position): The Membership Development Coordinator is responsible for the maintenance of the member database, membership drives (including membership renewals), and producing the MITESOL Directory. He/She may assign some of the duties related to the database to a Membership Information Manager.

SIG (Special Interest Group) Leaders (2 year position):

K – 12
Post-Secondary
Workplace
CALL

SIGS play a vital role in the MITE-SOL organization; often they are the only board members with whom members have a direct personal link. Because of this, the SIGs are

often one of the main reasons we retain members, thus enabling us to serve educators and administrators across the state.

If you would be interested in running for one of these positions, please feel free to contact a board member for further information. Serving on the board has been a rewarding experience for me.

~~Karen Gelardi, President

The Value of Understanding Your Students' Linguistic Heritages

One of my first ESL students was originally from Israel. Up until the time that I began to work with her I had taught primarily Spanish, and some ESL to Spanish-speakers. I had never seriously considered straying outside of the area of teaching Spanish to English-speakers, and English to Spanish-speakers, because as a bilingual person it seemed to make the most sense; I felt I would do my best work by staying within my linguistic comfort zone. Being comfortable with two unique linguistic backgrounds meant that I had an intimate understanding of both my students' native language structures and could anticipate and better explain the trouble zones they might encounter. In addition, between growing up in a linguistically diverse household (English with Spanish and Italian), and taking childhood Spanish grammar classes (an attempt by my mother for me not to lose our "other" language), I understand what it feels like to both be a native speaker and how to formally learn linguistic structure in a classroom setting. This further facilitated my Spanish-English language teaching.

I knew to look out for verbs in

Spanish such as "hacer" that have two different meanings in English ("to do" or "to make"). I always expected this kind of obstacle and was prepared to work with my students to learn to differentiate its use in English. Despite my initial plan to work with Spanish-language students, when I was asked to teach English to a woman who had recently arrived from Israel I immediately agreed. Although I hadn't planned to work with speakers of other languages, I didn't want to turn down the experience, especially since at the time I was the only available ESL teacher in her area. However I was anxious – I knew I would be forced to utilize techniques other than translation in order to teach, and I wasn't sure how effective I would be.

I remember our first lesson, when I administered an initial assessment to determine Rachel's* competency level. I found she spoke English fairly well, although she had problems with spelling and with pluralizing count nouns. She also intermittently left off the -ing when attempting to use the present progressive tense. These were all observable to me as a tutor. If she hadn't told me herself it may have

taken me at least a few classes before I understood that she needed intensive work in the area of using tenses properly. In Hebrew, she explained, time is more fluid; linguistically it is not structured as precisely or strictly as it is in the English language, for instance via the many tenses that English features. Rachel knew that she often misused English tenses and therefore communicated information incorrectly. For example, when she wanted to tell a friend that she wanted to plan a trip to the park, she would instead indicate that she had already gone to the park. Because Rachel used numerous English tenses with apparent ease and comfort I had no idea this was a problem area for her, and began to rethink the conversation we had had previously about her family and daily activities, realizing that she may not have expressed herself as precisely as I had thought!

I had many wonderful lessons working with Rachel. She was consistently surprised by any knowledge I expressed concerning Jewish practices and eating habits, and she also taught me quite a lot that I didn't know, including how difficult it

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TESOL 2009-Denver, CO~~MITESOL Reception

MITESOL hosted its annual reception for members at the TESOL Convention 2009 at Maggiano's Little Italy from 6 – 8 p.m., Thursday, March 26, 2009.

MITESOL received sponsorships for hosting this favorite annual event from Eastern Michigan University, Michigan State University, Cornerstone's MATESOL Program, Wayne State University and

even from individual members. Thanks to those whose generosity made this evening possible!

Sixty MITESOL members and their guests were present. There were hot and cold hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. Two door prizes were raffled off, adding to the festive atmosphere. Several groups from around the state attended, in-

cluding: EMU faculty and alumni, MSU faculty and alumni, MITESOL Past Presidents, "West-Siders" including Western Michigan faculty and alumni, and Wayne State faculty and alumni.

~~Lisa Hutchison, TESOL Liaison

View a TESOL 2009 PhotoStory created by Suzanne Haxer on the MITESOL website.

Connecting Reading and Writing Through Spelling Lists: A Whole Language Approach

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each month I searched the Internet for extracurricular reading material with links to a curriculum unit or grammar topic, focusing on local newspapers (e.g., *Detroit Free Press* or neighborhood papers) or websites I judged reliable (Wikipedia is sometimes helpful). I then chose weekly spelling words from a downloaded article. For example, for a curriculum unit on “shopping,” I chose the words “finance” and “financial” when I ran across an article in the *Detroit Free Press* called “Talk Dollars and Sense to Your Kids.” For a unit on health, I found an online article from the Hazelnut Council called “Hazelnuts Maximize the Healthfulness of Baked Goods.” One week I selected words from a sales brochure from H&R Block. In my search for extracurricular reading material, I was careful to avoid articles with heavy bias or controversy. Not all spelling words came from outside sources; some were selected from the course curriculum.

Before sharing downloaded articles with students, I modified the text, shortening sentences and eliminating lines or paragraphs to avoid information overload. I increased the font size to 13 and character spacing to .5, and split paragraphs to create “chunks” of reading for each student. I then printed copies for the class. (Tip: use “fast draft” printing option to save ink.)

For the rest of the week, students read an article aloud in whole class sharing over a period of two or three days. At the end of each chunk, or paragraph, I would ask the students if they had any questions. Lengthy pauses, eye contact,

question repeat, and a classroom atmosphere of trust and support all helped to encourage student questions. By discussing each paragraph, students could learn the meanings of many new words, not just the spelling words. All students were encouraged to read aloud, which was great pronunciation practice. These articles gave them insight into American culture beyond the ESL curriculum, and were great springboards for class discussion. For example, the “hazelnut” article led to a lively discussion



about American eating habits and problems with obesity. During the read aloud, students were asked to identify the spelling words in the article. The reading activity helped students come to a full semantic understanding of words in the spelling list as well as expose them to a visual imprint of the words each day.

In addition to contextualizing the spelling words in reading practice, students also wrote personal sentences with the words. This activity took place approximately once a week. All students who wished to participate were told to write two sentences, choosing any spelling words they wished, and write them on the board after a draft in their notebook. Most students asked me to check their draft before putting it on the board, but the more confi-

dent ones went straight from notebook to board. Beginning students could watch this activity if they weren't ready to write, but by the middle of the year almost all students were fully participating. Once the sentences were on the board, I corrected errors in front of the class. A classroom atmosphere of trust and support was extremely important in allowing students to see their work corrected before the group. Some students became adept at incorporating as many spelling words as possible in a single sentence. We would discuss grammar issues in relation to a sentence, or semantic issues in relation to grammar. Amazingly, the spelling words were almost always correct in every sentence.

Of course, we still had the traditional “spelling test” at the end of each week. I found the test really motivated my students to learn how to spell the words. For the test, I pronounced ten words from the list and used each in a sentence. By this time, students were thoroughly grounded in the semantic meaning of the words and could identify them from the dictated sentences. When I asked my students what techniques they used outside of class for spelling practice, those who were consistently successful with the weekly tests told me they simply copied the word over and over on paper, frequently having a family member check their work.

Because no test should be without compensation, I had to come up with a “prize” for students who got all or most of the words right. We run a coffee service in my classroom for a modest price. I came up with a “10 for 10” competition. If a

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Connecting Reading and Writing Through Spelling Lists: A Whole Language Approach

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student got all ten words correct for ten (non-sequential) tests, the student got free coffee that day. Students were amused, but it was just motivating enough to make them care. Of course, many cared about their spelling without the coffee. By the end of the year, one of my students, who started out a poor speller but showed significant improvement over time, began to complain that there was no reward for a score of “9.” This was close to the end of the year, so I told the class that whoever did five tests with 8 or 9 words correct could also have free coffee. After a few weeks, my problem speller had mastered five tests with scores of 8 or 9, so I announced “free coffee for everyone to celebrate.” This was a big hit with the students, and because it was close to the end of the year I could get away with a bending of the rules.



The words I chose for the weekly spelling list had to meet the following criteria:

1. of moderate difficulty. Typically the words had two-to-four syllables, although the list sometimes included one-syllable words to boost the confidence of beginning students, and occasionally a five-syllable word made its appearance.

2. linked to a semantic or grammatical theme, for example, a theme of “community” or a grammar category of “past tense verbs.”

3. useful for students to know. There are many words in English, or any language for that matter, that are challenging to spell. However, the purpose of the lists was to help my students learn to spell words that would be useful for them in the need for written communication.

The whole language approach to learning has been debated for many years, with some teachers decidedly for or against the approach, and

others still trying to understand the term. In this article I described a technique for spelling practice that combines traditional drill work (done by the students outside of class) with contextualized reading and writing practice. In this way students could gain knowledge of a word from different facets: grammatically, semantically, and phonologically. It is this combination of understanding, perhaps, that best explains the “whole” in “whole language.” Students benefited by learning to spell words that were of practical use in their everyday experience.

~~Beth Langelier teaches ESL for St. Clair Shores Adult and Community Education in St. Clair Shores, MI. The program recently merged with L’Anse Creuse Public Schools. This fall begins her fourth year of teaching the English language to adult learners. Her students are usually in the intermediate to advanced level.

Connecting EFL & ESL students with NING

The renaissance of blogs, social networking services, and other online communities have made connecting various groups of language learners a relatively simple task for ESL and EFL educators. In the past, logistical constraints made setting up correspondence between language classes a nightmare; pen-pal exchanges via snail mail took too long for any meaningful collaboration in most language classes, and email exchanges suffered from the various pitfalls of pairing up dozens, or even hundreds of

students from other cities or countries with each other. Blogs and other types of online communities have made setting up communication between language classes a snap. Using blogs to connect ESL and EFL learners to each other offers students a valuable and virtually instantaneous opportunity for exposure to various types of international English, foreign cultures, and perhaps most importantly, an outlet for meaningful communication with their language-learning peers.

I have been using blogs in

my English writing classes at Kwansai Gakuin University for almost four years now. At first, I only used blogs for intra-class writing activities, where a specific class would belong to a blog ring that would connect classmates to each other’s blogs. Although the students’ readership was limited, I witnessed how popular blogs were when students realized that their audience had expanded beyond their lone English teacher. I have also organized interna-

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could be to find Kosher snack food for her three kids. We worked on all of the English tenses starting with the present tenses and slowly moving through past and future. We learned the English names for foods and how foods can be prepared differently so that she would know how to ask for them at the grocery store. I had her bring in her favorite recipes, and I brought in an English cookbook so that we could talk about kitchen and baking terminology. Through this process I gained confidence in my ability to teach English to people of all nationalities and backgrounds, not just Spanish-speakers.

I had come to understand by practice that it's not truly necessary to speak the native language of your students in order to teach English successfully, but that it can be critical to have a basic understanding of the structure and characteristics of the students' home language in order to better prepare for the unique challenges they may face. Hebrew doesn't use the same tense system that English does. While many English Language Learners can compare their native language tense system to English, at least in a basic

way, it was much more difficult for Rachel. The linguistic structure she was accustomed to was fundamentally different than English, and in a sense she had to learn how to think about time in a new way. In addition to improving oral communication skills and learning tenses she had to learn an entirely new writing system, and the oftentimes-frustrating way that English words often don't seem to match their written counterparts.

While Rachel taught me a considerable amount about Hebrew, I also spent some of my own personal time researching the language, and took out a video from the local library that broke down the linguistic structure of Hebrew, as well as Hebrew phonology, which proved very helpful in helping Rachel to pronounce English sounds. Generally, great language information can be researched at your local library, and one excellent resource is a book titled *Learner English – A Teacher's Guide to Interference*, 2nd Edition, edited by Michael Swan and Bernard Smith, by Cambridge University Press. This book details the unique linguistic features of numerous world languages, and will help ESL teachers gain significant insights into the students' native languages, as well

as how such unique features may impact English language acquisition.

I still look back at Rachel as one of my most powerful teachers. She taught me the art of teaching ESL without the aid of translation; she taught me to be confident in my abilities as a teacher; and she taught me that although speaking the native languages of my students was not necessary (not to mention unrealistic), taking the time to familiarize oneself with the basic structure of other languages will make for more effective teaching. Teachers learn at least as much (if not more) from their students as students learn from their teachers. I encourage all ESL instructors to let their students help them become better teachers, and to give their students a valuable gift: that of becoming familiar with their students' linguistic heritages.
*pseudonym

~~Olivia Destrades Mendoza is a graduate student in the TESOL program at Grand Valley State University. She teaches Spanish and ESL with Global LT, and is currently preparing for her Master's thesis research regarding the success of multilingual education in the Basque Country, Spain.

Connecting With a Career: Résumé Building While in Michigan

Many of the students I work with are the spouses of Dow Chemical employees who are at company headquarters in Midland on a short-term basis. Typically, the husband is here for two years of training and goes back to his home country to a more responsible position. The wife is "the trailing spouse," and often is well-educated and has left a job behind.



Midland is enough of an adjustment, after bustling Tokyo or Sao Paulo, and the ESL classes serve an important social function, when

they realize they are not the only ones feeling adrift. This is even more crucial when the wife is the employee tapped for the new position and training, and the husband finds himself in the unaccustomed role of picking up kids from school and all that is involved in his new role as house husband.

Whether male or female, the

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Connecting EFL & ESL students with NING

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tional email exchanges that were big hits with students despite the fact that they suffered from snags with mistaken email addresses, mismatched students, and other logistical pitfalls. Although these two types of writing have their differences, one of the main reasons for their success and popularity with students was the same: students invest time and effort into these types of writing not just because they are getting graded on it, but because they know their peers will be reading and commenting on them as well.

While I had previously experienced different levels of success in connecting language learners with each other via various electronic mediums, it was not until a few months ago that a colleague, Jennifer Rice, and I experimented with the online social networking site NING in our university writing classes. By utilizing NING's ability to create blogs and combine them with platforms for highly customizable networks, one of our goals was to connect our Japanese students' English blogs with other student blog communities in the hopes of interacting with EFL students in different countries. The result was that our students got to read, comment, and

have their blog entries read and commented on not only by their classmates and other students at our university, but by scores of Korean students from other universities as well. Although conflicting semester schedules shortened our international blog interactions to a span of about a month, it was a productive stretch for everyone involved. Despite our relatively short window for opportunities for international blog exchanges with the Korean students, our Japanese students were still able to exchange blog entries with students from other classes and



majority at our own university, as well as another university in Japan for the entirety of the semester, all thanks to the various networks we were able to connect to via NING.

In total, my students wrote eight blog entries over the course of the semester, and throughout the month-long blog exchange with students from two different Korean universities, each of my 109 students wrote three 200 word blog entries, and also read and commented on blogs written by Korean students. The Japanese students were also able to listen to the Korean students' audio blogs and comments, which is one of the many optional features that can be

incorporated into NING networks.

My students had a fun time uploading personal pictures of places and events and incorporating them into their blogs, which gave the Korean students a glimpse into the lives of their language learning peers in Japan. All of the students involved in the exchange were able to see their language in action, and they were able to experience a slice of each other's cultures without ever having to leave their language classrooms.

Further possibilities of audio and video exchanges promise for even more exciting interactions in the future. Connecting language learners has come a long way since the days of pen pals, letters, envelopes, and stamps, indeed.

If you are interested in starting up your own language learner social network on NING, setting things up is extremely easy: First, go to NING.com, where you will be prompted to name your social network, and even pick your own web address (or URL) for your site. Next, sign up for a free NING account by entering your name, email address, and choosing a password. Technically, this is all you have to do to get your network started, but there are many options for customization and numerous widgets that you can add to enhance your site. I

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Connecting EFL & ESL students with NING

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would suggest keeping things simple at first, perhaps by adding the blog function, and maybe online chat and a discussion forum as well. If you plan to use the network with numerous classes that you are teaching, you can create separate groups within the network to keep them neatly organized. Of course, you can always further customize your network later on as you grow

more accustomed to how NING works.

For the fall semester, I plan to utilize a new NING network to join EFL and ESL teachers from all over the world to explore further opportunities for language and culture exchange. If you would like to connect your class to our network, or just want take a look around our new site, please check out the English Ning Global Language Interactive Social Hub (ENGLISH) at <http://english-hub.ning.com> You can sign up for NING in a matter of

seconds, and join the “Ninguists” teacher group on our site for some details on our project. It's very easy, and it's 100% free. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, don't hesitate to send me an email at kgurooks@gmail.com

~~Matthew Rooks is an Instructor of English as a Foreign Language at Kwansei Gakuin University.

MITESOL members can use NING now!

Carol Kubota, Professional Development Chair, invites everyone to join a social network page for teachers who are working with technology and online learning materials for their ELL/ESL learners. It can be reached at <http://eslellonlinelearning.ning.com>

Connecting With a Career: Résumé Building While in Michigan

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students in my class often express nostalgia and concern for being out of touch with their field. They also fear that they will have a hole in their resume that will not be helpful when trying to return to work when they go home. For that reason, when possible, we try to arrange for students to do some volunteer work in their fields while in our community. This is something specific they can add to their resumes and gives them another place to use their English while here. The psychological boost is immeasurable, since they still feel connected to their careers.

Anna is now back in Brazil, but in class would often speak of her work with an architectural firm in

Sao Paulo. Midland does have a regional claim to fame with the architectural work of Alden Dow, son of company founder H.H. Dow. We were able to arrange for Anna to do archival work three afternoons a week, with the original architectural drawings of many of the churches, schools and public buildings she was getting to know in the community. The original Alden Dow Studio, next to the Dow Gardens, is a jewel of a setting, and the work is something that she could relate to.

Maysa was newly married and followed her husband to Midland. It didn't take long for me to realize she hadn't been out of dental school long, had just gotten work in her field, and missed it terribly. The managers of a local affordable den-

tal clinic in a strip mall allowed her to assist, and she loved being useful. Furthermore, she had to use her English while there and developed a specialized vocabulary that would be relevant to and beyond what we would cover in class.

Seeing this connection with the community and the student's field of training opened my eyes. We try to steer students into areas of volunteering, such as Meals On Wheels, but when you can really connect with their passion, it's win-win.

~~Cheryl Weeks-Rosten works at Education and Training Connection, Midland, Michigan.

Open Positions and Nominees for 2009-2011 MITESOL Board

President-Elect Position - Nominee: Wendy Wang, Ph.D.

Dr. Wendy Wang is an Associate Professor of ESL/TESOL in the Department of Foreign Language Languages and Bilingual Studies at Eastern Michigan University. She has extensive teaching experience in various settings. She has taught English as a foreign language (EFL) in China and as a second language (ESL) in Canada. After earning her Ph.D. at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, the University of Toronto, Dr. Wang held a post-doctoral fellowship as a second language specialist in the Department of Educational Theory and Practice in the School of Education, the



State University of New York at Albany. Dr. Wang joined the ESL/ TESOL faculty at Eastern in 1999, where she has been teaching both

graduate and undergraduate ESL and TESOL courses including *Pedagogical Grammar and Phonology of ESL*, *Second Language Acquisition for Classroom Teachers*, *Classroom Observation and Analysis*, *Global English Language Education*, *TESOL Seminar* and *TESOL Practicum*.

Dr. Wang's current research interest includes sociocultural aspects of second language learning, classroom discourse analysis, pedagogical grammar, and issues related to nonnative English-speaking professionals.

Membership Coordinator – Nominee: Morgan Cox

Morgan Cox began her career in education at the University of Michigan, where she earned her bachelor's degree in English and history. She continued her coursework in U-M's MAC program and received an MA in secondary education with a focus on teaching for social justice. After a year of work-



ing with refugee youth in the Minneapolis public schools, Morgan returned to Michigan and began teaching full-time at Northville High School. Currently, Morgan teaches both English and ESL in Northville. She recently completed the TESOL certification program at Eastern Michigan University.

Communications Coordinator: No nominees

SIG Leader for Workplace/ ESP: No nominees

SIG Leader for Post-Secondary: No nominees

Communications Coordinator: No nominees



Open Positions and Nominees for 2009-2011 MITESOL Board

SIG Leader for K-12 – Nominee: Lisa Hutchison

Currently a secondary ESL teacher at Lamphere High School in Madison Heights, Michigan, Lisa has also taught ESL in adult education and ESP programs. Her experience teaching in community colleges and universities includes ESL courses at Oakland Community College, Henry Ford Community College, Eastern Michigan University, Michigan State 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.



Presently the Past-President of MITESOL, she has also served 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, development and presentation of teacher-training workshops in the county.

TESOL Position Statement on the Rights of Deaf Learners to Acquire Full Proficiency in a Native Signed Language

TESOL supports multilingualism and the right to advanced literacy in both native and second languages. In the case of Deaf students, TESOL recognizes and supports Deaf learners' right to become proficient in a signed language or written or spoken language(s), including English. For learners who are hearing impaired, the learning of signed language and the promotion of the Deaf community's linguistic identity are fundamental to engagement in the second language acquisition process and their need to participate fully in the Deaf community.

TESOL supports individual language rights and an accessible high-quality education for all learners of English, including Deaf students. TESOL advocates that adequate support and resources be allocated for bilingual education programs, including programs for Deaf students that utilize a native signed language. Furthermore, TESOL supports teaching methods and materials that recognize Deaf learners' right to become proficient in a native signed language and in written or spoken language(s), including English.

Approved by the Executive Committee

June 2009

2009 MITESOL Conference

Transforming Teaching: Teaching and Advocacy



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MITESOL 2009 Featured Speakers

Featured Speaker: Dr. Nkechy Ezeh

Nkechy Ezeh, Ed.D. joined the Aquinas College faculty in 1997. Dr. Ezeh who is from Nigeria, West Africa is a strong advocate for children and has worked as a preschool teacher, Child Development Program Director, Adult and Parent Educator and Early Childhood Education Consultant. Dr. Ezeh, a member of the faculty of Aquinas College School of Education teaches several Early Childhood Education courses, Emergent Literacy, Multicultural Education, Human Growth & Development and Educational Psychology. Dr. Ezeh also serves as the Director of the Early Childhood Endorsement Program. Dr. Ezeh was one of the U.S. delegates to Reggio Emilia, Italy in 2001 and a panelist on the 2004 Oxford University Early Literacy Round Table. Dr. Ezeh conducts training on Early Childhood related topics and on integrating the Reggio Emilia principles into staff development and teacher preparation programs.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Donald Freeman

Dr. Donald Freeman is Director of Teacher Education and Associate Professor of Education at the School of Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA. Until June 2007, he was Dean of the Department of Language Teacher Education and director of the Center for Teacher Education, Training, and Research, at the graduate School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont. His research interests focus on teacher learning, in the contexts of organizational and systemic reform, and its influence on student learning. He serves on the Editorial Board of the Modern Language Journal and previously on the boards of the Educational Researcher and the TESOL Journal. He is past president of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), and member of the University of Cambridge ESOL Advisory Council.

Featured Speaker: Susan E. Reed, Esq.

Susan E. Reed is an Immigration Law attorney with the Michigan Poverty Law Program. Susan has spent her career advocating for the civil rights of our most vulnerable immigrants. Susan has worked on behalf of migrant and seasonal farm workers, asylum seekers, survivors of domestic violence, and unaccompanied minors as an attorney for Farmworker Legal Services of Michigan and the United Methodist Committee on Relief's Justice for Our Neighbors program. She is bilingual and uses her Spanish language skills to better understand her clients and community. Susan remains at the forefront of immigration law as both an attorney and a leader as she educates communities and organizations on creating systematic advocacy efforts on behalf of Michigan's low income immigrants and their families

Need more information or want to volunteer?
Contact Casey Gordon, MITESOL President Elect
caseygordon@sbcglobal.net (please put MITESOL in the subject line)