



**“Spotlight on Re-Search:  
A New Beginning”**

**Selected Proceedings of the 2008  
Michigan Teachers of English to  
Speakers of Other Languages  
Conference**

**October 24-25, 2008**

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**Preface**

On October 24-25, 2008, the Michigan Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (MITESOL) met on the campus of Michigan State University, in East Lansing, Michigan, for its annual fall conference. The conference, chaired by President-Elect Karen Gelardi, offered a total of 58 talks, workshops, and poster sessions, as well as a Friday evening reception, Saturday luncheon and business meeting, Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings, and publisher exhibits.

Special guests for the conference were our plenary and featured speakers. Diane Larsen-Freeman (University of Michigan and School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont) was the plenary speaker for Friday evening, giving an inspirational talk relevant to all attendees—teachers and researchers—entitled *Prediction or Retrodiction: The Coming Together of Research and Teaching*. Martha Bigelow (University of Minnesota) gave Saturday morning's plenary address on *The Role of Literacy in Oral Language Processing: Implications for Research and Teaching*. In the afternoon, four speakers were featured in addition to breakout sessions, making for a difficult choice for conference attendees. Martha Bigelow continued to mesmerize her audience with her talk on Somali youth titled *Language, Society, and Education: What Do Immigrant Youth Have to Say?* Walid Gammouh (Oak Park Schools) spoke on addressing the unique social and educational needs of refugee children in his talk *Refugees: How Did They Get Here, and What Works for Them?* Encouraging attendees to reflect on their accomplishments and how they might create a new direction for MITESOL's future was the topic of Jackie Moase-Burke's (Oakland Schools) *Re-Searching Professional Identity: A Retrospective and A Fresh Direction*. Finally, Mary Schleppegrell (University of Michigan) led attendees into an exploration of grammar as patterns, rather than rules, in her talk entitled *Reading, Writing, and Grammar: Making Connections*.

For the fourth consecutive year, MITESOL is pleased to offer a selection of papers from the conference. We teach a diverse range of learners, and, as can be seen in this volume, we have a diverse range of interests. This volume of the proceedings, as in previous years, is divided into three main areas: Research, Issues in TESOL, and Materials Development & Teaching Techniques. Within each area, papers are presented in alphabetical order by first authors' surnames. An exception this year is that we are delighted to include the paper versions of both plenary addresses; these are presented before the other papers in the order in which they took place at the conference.

The first section of this volume is Research. We are honored to include the paper version of Larsen-Freeman's plenary address, which she graciously wrote upon our request. In *Prediction or Retrodiction?: The Coming Together of Research and Teaching*, Larsen-Freeman stresses the value of both research and teaching while urging a stance of reciprocity: researchers should consider learning from teachers' perspectives and teachers should cultivate "attitudes of inquiry." Bigelow discusses the power of prior literacy, not only on L2 literacy, but also on oral language development in her plenary

paper *The Role of Literacy in Oral Language Processing: Implications for Research*. In a quantitative study supplemented with case studies, she argues that those learners with low alphabet literacy in their L1 are a different population than what has more traditionally been presented in the literature. The role of phonological working memory on the L2 vocabulary acquisition of ESL children is then explored in a quantitative study by Pearson in *Phonological Working Memory and Preschool ESL Children: A Study and Review of the Literature*. She raises the question of whether nonword repetition tasks can predict ease/difficulty of second language acquisition and thus be a potential screening tool or differential diagnostic measure in this population. This section concludes with a paper by Thinsan entitled *Constructivism in Online ELL/ENL/ESOL Teacher Education: The Learners' Perspectives*. In it, Thinsan shares a qualitative study exploring the use of pedagogical techniques, specifically those using constructivist principles, in a teacher education program.

The second section of this volume, Issues in TESOL, begins with a second paper by Bigelow entitled *Texts and Contexts for Cultural and Linguistic Hybridity in the Diaspora*. In this paper, Bigelow uses texts produced by Somali adolescent males to explore the power of society in shaping their perspectives and identities. The second paper in this section, *The Challenges Faced by Teachers of Generation 1.5 Students at the Community College*, is by Pruett-Said. In it, she discusses those students who often “fall through the cracks” and the difficulty in appropriate placement at the post-secondary level, concluding with a discussion of how teachers can help such students.

The last section of this volume includes two papers involving Materials Development & Teaching Techniques. Pearson, Roth, and King report on a teacher-training course, from both instructor and student perspectives, in their paper *From Tongue-Tied to Empowered: Teacher-Training on Migrant Issues Using Project-Based Learning*. Under this approach, students investigated issues that impact children of migrant families and then designed projects that would support the children’s English language development and literacy acquisition. Riggs concludes this volume with his paper *An Analysis of English Tense and Aspect*. Noting that this topic can be “daunting” for teachers and students alike, Riggs presents an approach that divides time into four categories with the hopes that his visuals and explanations will help to ease the all-too-common apprehension this topic generates.

As with previous volumes, the papers have been printed in the final form in which they were submitted, often following requested revisions by the editors. Only minor editing has taken place by the editors before printing of the volume. Also as before, copyright and responsibility for the contents of all papers reside with the individual authors. Therefore, all questions, requests for reprints, and permission to reproduce should be directed to the individual authors whose addresses appear at the end of each paper in the author note.

We would like to thank all who were involved in making this project a reality. The authors have given generously of their time, first, as presenters, and second, in converting their talks into paper form, often through a lengthy revision process. Each editor has played a specific and much needed role. Kay Losey generously gave up a great deal of her sabbatical time in order to mentor authors on both content and writing in this genre. With her expertise in writing, Kay provides the backbone to the mentoring

and editing process. Michael Pasquale also helped mentor authors through the writing process this year while continuing to juggle all his work responsibilities including a growing program. Pamela Bogart added much to this year's volume with her meticulous attention to all areas of APA style, especially her detailed checking of all sources in all papers (a massive undertaking) and editing of the citations with precision. Rachel Anderson worked her tech wizardry by turning a collection of papers into a finely-tuned volume ready to be sent to the publishers. She has greatly helped ease our loss of Nigel Caplan's expertise as he has moved on to another position in North Carolina. Christy Pearson has done her usual mentoring of authors while attending to her primary responsibility of shepherding the long process of the proceedings along. And finally, a special thank you to Carol Wilson-Duffy for her input and guidance in the publication process.

We hope you enjoy the diverse array of papers in this volume and we hope to see you at the 2009 MITESOL Conference in Grand Rapids!

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