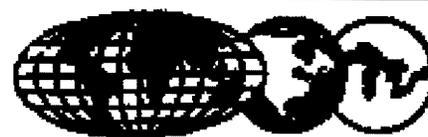


# MITESOL Messages

August 1997  
Vol. XXIII, No. 2



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

## President's Corner

by Sara Tipton

One of the reasons I pursued a degree in TESL was to be engaged with people who travel and who see the world from an international perspective; also, I had hoped that such a career would insure more stamps on my passport. But, alas, I haven't been anywhere outside the U.S. since 1985, when my Peace Corps experience ended. I decided to do something about this on New Year's Day, the beginning of my fortieth year.

Today I'm recovering from jet lag because I returned a few days ago from an eleven day trip to the Czech Republic and Denmark—a blessed vacation squeezed into the semester, thanks to cooperative colleagues. While I'm sorry that it was over so quickly, I benefited greatly from the experience of being in a foreign language again and feeling the exhilaration of travel.

In the Czech Republic, my partner, Nicholas, and I were hosted by MITESOL's ATECR colleagues, and housed in a convenient location in Prague that enabled us to explore the wonders of that glorious city.

*(continued on page 6)*

## Michigan State Board of Education approves ESL Endorsement

by Sandra Hagman

On July 17, 1997, MITESOL members attending the Michigan State Board of Education meeting in Lansing witnessed the culmination of their fifteen-year effort to achieve recognition of ESL standards in K-12 programs for language minority students in Michigan schools. This action by the State Board creates a teaching certificate endorsement in ESL, and also recognizes specific standards for the preparation of teachers for the ESL endorsement.

The professional standards for persons teaching ESL in Michigan were proposed in a document prepared last summer by a task force of MITESOL members including Sandra Hagman, Jackie Moase-Burke, Betsy Morgan, Barbara Moten, Nancy Schewe, and Sara Tipton. Copies of the document were distributed to the membership at the November, 1996 MITESOL Fall Conference. [The text of the document still appears on the MITESOL website. See new address, this issue.]

MITESOL's 1996 proposal was not the first effort by the affiliate to gain recognition for the professional education and training of qualified ESL teachers in Michigan. Veteran MITESOL members remember preparing information for discussions at the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) in Lansing in the early 1980s. A major ESL endorsement campaign in 1989-1990 resulted in a MITESOL proposal reaching the State Board, but that effort was frustrated because of a lack of support by certain leaders of the bilingual education constituency in Michigan. Throughout the extensive period of our efforts, MITESOL watched as TESOL Central Office reported

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# MITESOL Fall Conference

**Saturday, September 27, 1997**

**Ann Arbor**

**Washtenaw Intermediate School District  
1819 South Wagner Road, Ann Arbor**

## **Theme:**

***“ESL Learners + English skills  
= Academic Achievement”***

## **Featured speakers:**

**Jo Ann Aegersold and Mary Lee Field**

## **Panel discussion:**

**What will Michigan's new K-12 ESL  
endorsement mean for you?**

---

## **Call for Participation and Presentations**

**Due date for submission of proposals: August 25, 1997.**

**Submit your proposals for a poster session, a paper,  
demonstration, discussion group or workshop to:**

**Sandra Hagman, MITESOL Conference Chair**

**Intercultural Training Associates, Inc.**

**836 S. Williams Lake Rd.**

**White Lake, MI 48386.**

**Phone 248-363-9441**

**Fax: 248-363-8306**

**e-mail: 102120.3120@compuserve.com**

**A proposal form can be found at the MITESOL website  
at: <http://www.eli.wayne.edu/mitesol/>**

## From the Editor

How wonderful it is to be the bearer of such glad news as the unanimous passage of the endorsement for K-12 certification for ESL teachers. It is delightful to celebrate the positive accomplishment of the hopes and hard work of so many.

Among those celebrating with us was our own Joan Morley who, even at the funeral of her beloved husband of thirty-eight years, had room in her heart for MITESOL and those who worked so hard to give to others, an accomplishment very familiar to Joan who gives so generously of her time, talents, knowledge and experience. While caring for her ailing husband, she served as MITESOL plenary speaker on numerous occasions and was always ready with a presentation at MITESOL from which many benefited from her innovative work in ESL.

It is, unfortunately, also the editor's duty to be the bearer of less happy tidings, and so it is that I pass along the news of the death of Charles Powell, our sociopolitical correspondent. He had been struggling with cancer for most of this year, and succumbed to the illness this month. Charles was well known for his tireless efforts for MITESOL and TESOL, but even more for his innate decency and kindness and his unfailing cheerfulness. He will be very much missed by those who knew and loved him.



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## ESL Endorsement

(cont'd from pg. 1)

*"The final approval by the Michigan State Board of Education of an ESL Endorsement was for me the accomplishment of a major life goal. It had become personal.*

*"I first became involved with the ESL endorsement effort in the late 1980s, while serving with Jackie Moase-Burke and Liz England on the State Board of Education (SBE) Ad-Hoc Committee to Review the Bilingual Education Act. When the work of that committee did not result in an endorsement, I was appointed in the fall of 1993, through the MEA, to serve as a member of the Professional Standards Commission for Teachers, an SBE Advisory Commission. It was at the final meeting of my four years on that commission, May 22, 1997, that the ESL endorsement was finally approved. It was sent to the State Board in July, and the rest is history.*

*"What did I learn? I learned that educating people about the specific needs of our students is essential. Educating people about the realities of how students are served in districts—for better or for worse—is also necessary. But most importantly, I learned that our fervent belief that what we were asking for was truly best for kids made the difference. We came back each and every time we were denied until we finally reached our goal.*

*"Equal to the enormous satisfaction of finally achieving this goal is my appreciation of the lifelong MITESOL friends I came to know. Together we laughed and cried, drove to Lansing a million times, logged hundreds of hours on the telephone and e-mail wires, and finally, last month, drank champagne together. How sweet it was!"*

—Nancy Schewe



The PSCT voted unanimously to send the endorsement proposal to the Board of Education. Cathy Day, Sandra Hagman, Betsy Morgan, and Jackie Moase-Burke.

representatives in attendance at two sessions of the Commission.

During early spring 1997, public hearings were held and input was solicited from a wide range of educational organizations, teacher preparation institutions, intermediate school districts, local school districts, and offices within the Michigan Department of Education. MITESOL representatives and others knowledgeable about ESL endorsement issues attended the hearings and gave informed and impressive testimony in support of the endorsement proposal.

These discussions revealed wide support for the MITESOL proposal, and the PSCT voted unanimously to recommend ESL endorsement for approval by the State Board of Education.

Appropriate reports and documents were prepared by the staff of the MDE Office of Professional Preparation and Certification, reviewed by the office of the State Superintendent, and included on the State Board agenda for approval on July 17. The report to the Board points out that the ESL endorsement will "provide local school districts with options for

*"I felt euphoria and relief and satisfaction [at the news that the endorsement had passed in the State legislature]; I felt that feeling you get when you know that collectively, we've worked hard on something that has impact and really matters. You know, so often it feels that we do so much and then later wonder what it's all for? Not this time. I really admire our colleagues who have devoted tireless energy and often guts to this project. For them, the victory is very sweet. I also feel a tremendous sense of responsibility—to join the effort to make sense of it to others, to see that the plans get properly implemented, and to provide the people and resources [that are needed for implementation]."*

—Sara Tipton

*"I came across the testimony I had given to the State Board of Education on October 1, 1985 recently—on the need for endorsement in ESL. "Deja vu all over again" was what I was feeling when we went to the Board meeting on July 17, 1997. And then, when they called Bruce Morgan to give testimony but hadn't taken the endorsement off the agenda, we didn't know what to do. It was done! Sandy Hagman was great when she thanked them and said we wouldn't waste their time, but we'd answer any questions they might have. When they voted unanimously, it was almost as if we didn't know what to do. But we did manage to contain ourselves until we got out of the building! Congratulations to all of those, from Annette Baron, appointed by Jo Ann Aebersold in 1982 (?) to work on certification, to the current group of MITESOL leaders!"*

—Cathy Day



*The word goes out! Cathy Day and Sandy Hagman outside the Board of Ed meeting room after the endorsement is voted on.*

addressing the educational needs of learners with limited English proficiency." The report concludes by saying: "The creation of the new endorsement area is intended to increase the pool of specially skilled and certified individuals available to serve the needs of LEP students. School districts will continue to be able to determine the type of certification that is most appropriate for their programs for LEP students. These proposed changes will have no impact on the certifications of individuals who currently hold bilingual endorsements."

Having achieved the long-sought goal of ESL endorsement, MITESOL intends to continue working collaboratively in Michigan with the MDE, universities, school districts, and all interested persons in furthering recognition and implementation of ESL professional standards. These efforts coincide with TESOL's current project establishing Pre-K-12 ESL standards and student assessment guidelines.

To address the specific concerns of individuals regarding the implementation and impact of endorsement guidelines, a special panel discussion on the K-12 ESL endorsement will be featured at the MITESOL Fall Conference to be held in Ann Arbor at the Washtenaw Intermediate School District on September 27. Further information in response to frequently asked

questions will be posted on the MITESOL website and included in newsletter articles published in MITESOL Messages.

*"It was a real experience to go through this initiative with such seasoned MITESOL colleagues. Although I haven't worked as long on this project as many others, it was no less a delight for me to be in the room when the endorsement was unanimously approved by the Board of Ed. What a thrill to have been part of such a momentous achievement!"*

—Betsy Morgan



*Michigan State Board of Education and MITESOL members (l. to r.) Sue Wittick, Carolyn Logan, Dot Van Looy, Nancy Schewe, Sandra Hagman, Betsy Morgan, Sara Tipton, Cathy Day, Bruce Morgan, and Helen Prutow, Oakland School Board of Education member after the endorsement passed.*

## President's Corner

(cont'd from pg. 1)

One evening, we had dinner with the ATECR president, Marta Chroma, the vice-president, Eva Novakova, and the immediate past-president, Jana Dvorakova. We discussed at length the future of our partnership, especially their desire for one-to-one professional connections via e-mail and for a future summer teacher training in-service that MITESOL members would deliver. They also discussed their difficulty in getting people to donate time for the organization. The volunteer spirit, they explained, is new in Central Europe.

We also discussed materials. I carried one box of teacher resource books, generously donated from Sandra Browne's personal library, that will be distributed appropriately, and MITESOL will be shipping two more boxes this summer. It excites me to see that our partnership, which grew out of a few individual relationships into a collective, professional one, is solid, with many ways for all of us to participate.



Sara Tipton and Jarmila Fictumova, who visited Michigan and TESOL.

The next day, Jarmila Fictumova, the '97 delegate to TESOL who also visited Michigan in March, met us to have lunch and tour the city. It was marvelous to see her again and to strengthen that professional tie. After we parted, I realized that this exchange was what I have been longing for in my professional life and how privileged I am to represent MITESOL in the capacity of president.

Next, we traveled by train to the village in Northern Bohemia where Nicholas spent his summers as a child. There, I was surrounded by Czech, Romanian and some English for three days, lapping up the luxury of intercultural babel and the hilarity of half-finished phrases accompanied by gestures and smiles.

It isn't that I had forgotten the feeling of being a language minority, but it's a boost to my empathy as a teacher to be in a situation again where it really counts. I felt it most acutely while being driven to an undisclosed destination for the evening, willing to go along for the ride but not entirely comfortable with not being in control.

I knew somehow that it was good for me.

The last leg of our trip was in Denmark, where nearly everyone, not just those interacting with tourists, speaks English beautifully and often German, too. Also, the American, German and British evening news is on television live every night. In fact, we learned about the tornado that hit metro-Detroit just as the rest of America did!

We marveled at the lack of potholes in the roads as we drove through most of the country; the sleek, stylish and brightly-colored designs of furnishings in store windows; and the relaxed, sunny openness of the Danes.

My travel bug is back, and I am planning now for the next adventure. And while I realize that many of you have had these experiences, I hope we will remind each other to continue to relive them and call upon them in our work.



Board members of ATE-CK (from left to right) Eva Pavlincova, Vice President; Jana Dvorakova, Past President; Marta Chroma, President; and Sara Tipton.

## Project work and classroom interaction

by Glenn Deckert

Prepared oral reports delivered to classmates in ESL classes can be artificial and, at times, incomprehensible. Yet many students have a natural desire to report to others the results of the work they have done on "their" project, so I have employed a class reporting technique, especially in research paper writing courses, with considerable success.

First, every student writes an abstract, not to exceed one hundred words, that gives the topic, thesis and major findings of their research. At this point, it is usually necessary to help students write a streamlined profile of their work through careful selection and ordering of essential points. Showing them sample abstracts

and overseeing the revision and editing process while they write their abstracts pays off later in a more finished product.

Second, on a given day, every student brings to class five copies of his or her polished abstract: one to keep, one for the instructor and three for random distribution to classmates. All students end up with abstracts from three other students as well as their own.

Third, as a homework assignment, each student studies the three abstracts they received and writes at least five questions about each to use in class later to elicit information from the writer that is not contained in the abstract. These questions typically seek definitions, expansions, examples or causes

for the concepts and information in the abstract.

Fourth, according to an agreed-upon schedule, three students are featured each class period over a week or so. In each meeting, instead of three canned readings or memorized reports, each of the three students who are scheduled announces his or her topic and thesis and stands ready to answer questions from the three students who have prepared questions on that abstract.

After the prepared questions are asked and answered, other students may raise questions as well. The whole class enters into genuine interaction, the depth of each student's project and the work they need to do for the final paper becomes apparent, and the students have experience in oral reporting and real oral interacting as well.

## The skill of giving directions: Where's the student center?

by William Teichert

Have you ever had to ask someone for directions? Have you ever discovered that maybe you didn't know your campus as well as you thought? Well, some students found out last year during a study skills class that I taught how hard it is to give and get directions.

It all started one afternoon when one of my Korean students raised his hand and told me the section of the book that dealt with orientation was boring and

impractical. That night I went home and thought carefully about his remarks. I decided that the book needed to be adapted if my students were to get real meaning from it and be motivated to learn English. So I used the university campus to create a scavenger hunt for my students.

At the next class, I sent my students out in groups with a list of things to do and get at various places. They were to get

a college catalog from admissions; find the quickest way between the dormitory and the library; go to the Academic Help Center and make an appointment; ask a vendor for the location of the nearest restroom; buy stamps and send mail home at the post office; and find and collect parking brochures, among other tasks.

The scavenger hunt had mixed results, as seen in the

*(continued on page 11)*

## High impact orthographies: Does it matter if language learners start from a non-Roman alphabet background?

by Margot Haynes

At the Spring 1997 MITESOL Conference, a small group and I got together to discuss an area often neglected in ESL teacher education: orthographic learning.

The common assumption is that learning an alphabet is a short-term enterprise—after all, there are only twenty-six letters to learn in English! Nevertheless, my review of the research in L1 and L2 reading and cognitive psychology, as well as my own research with Chinese readers from Taiwan, indicate the acquisition of a new writing system is a long-term enterprise.

As early as 1964, Crothers, Suppes and Weir found English speakers learning Russian to be surprisingly slow in visual letter word recognition, even after reaching a high level of accuracy with the Cyrillic alphabet. Likewise, Brooks (1977) showed in detail the agonizingly slow progress of learners processing invented symbols which paralleled the English alphabet. These findings echo studies a century ago with learners of telegraphy who needed to develop speed and automaticity in recognizing the incoming message in telegraph code (Byran and Harter 1899). It took the better part of a year of concentrated practice for learners to reach an adequate receiving rate for telegraphic messages, and even so, it was several years

before workers could process messages with full automaticity. How much more effortful and gradual the acquisition of a new code, for second language learners, when the vocabulary, grammar, and cultural content are unfamiliar! These telegraphers were not learning a new language, just a new set of symbols in which their familiar language would be coded! And yet they took months to become

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fast enough to be employable on the telegraph line!

My work with Chinese learners, whose transfer to an alphabet is even more difficult than in studies cited above, since they are starting from a non-alphabetic (logographic) system, suggests that a wide range of

difficulties in language learning can be traced to the very gradual nature of their orthographic learning. Even after years of English study, college students remain extremely slow readers of English. I have also documented vowel misrecognitions, whole-word misrecognitions (such as “wrist” read as “waist”), and confusion of similar-looking words in memory (words such as “laceration” and “elasticity” when newly-learned are easily confused with one another) (Haynes and Carr 1990).

Slow visual encoding and instability of word representation in memory lead to problems throughout the reading process, making Krashen’s argument that students can learn through reading a highly questionable one, at least for Chinese students. The impact of orthographic awkwardness extends throughout reading, including tunnel vision, miscomprehensions of text, difficulty integrating ideas while reading, and confusion in remembering the content and new words learned from reading.

What in our field has been a neglected area of “language” learning—orthographic or writing-system learning—appears to have a long-range impact on learners’ language

*(continued on page 12)*

# Netiquette

by Miriam Seaver

If you've used the internet more than once, or have just listened to people talk about using it, you've probably come across the term "netiquette." What is netiquette? As you might guess, it is internet etiquette—the social rules of appropriate behavior that help smooth the paths of internet communication.

A simple net search will turn up many lists of netiquette guidelines, some short and simple, others detailed and extensive, some for just one domain (like e-mail or Usenet), others for all domains. There are even whole books on the subject! From this wealth, I have distilled the following set of basic guidelines for users of e-mail and e-mail discussion lists.

1. Apply your basic social training: treat people via e-mail as you would treat them face to face.

2. Remember that e-mail is very accessible and forwardable, and that lists are public. Even in personal e-mail, Arlene Rinaldi (the Miss Manners of the internet) warns, "Never send something that you would mind seeing on the evening news." And when posting to a list, follow Bob Crispen's advice: "Treat every post as though you were sending a copy to your boss, your minister, and your worst enemy."

3. Give each message an informative and appropriate subject line.

4. Include a signature in messages posted to lists or sent to people who don't know you. the signature should include your name, position, affiliation, and internet address, and should not exceed four lines.

5. When you join a list, read the welcome message and any guidelines or FAQ (frequently asked questions) document provided, and keep these where you can easily refer to them later.

6. Note the difference between the list server's address, where you send mail management commands like "subscribe" and "unsubscribe," and the list's posting address, where you send messages to be distributed to the whole list. Use the correct address for your purpose.

7. After joining a list, lurk (just read others' postings) for a while to learn what's appropriate there before you post.

8. When replying to a posted message, make sure your reply will go where you intend. Don't send replies meant for one person to the whole list.

9. when responding to a posted message, quote as much, but only as much, as needed to show what you are responding to. Also, put your response after the quote.

10. Don't forward personal mail to a list without the author's permission.

11. To avoid problems for people with different systems, limit lines to 70 characters, and don't use control characters.

12. Remember your audience is international.

13. When not accessing your e-mail for over a week, suspend

mail or unsubscribe from your lists. This helps prevent overloading of your mailbox, which can give a list problems.

14. Read one of the references below for a more thorough introduction, and reread it occasionally as a refresher.

Happy socially-acceptable e-mailing!

## Sources:

"Core rules of Netiquette"

[[http://](http://frodo.dcs.it.mtu.edu:8080/ateaml/netiquette.html)

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## Freeing inhibitions by relieving anxiety in the multicultural classroom

by Dean-Michael Lynn

How many of you still feel the "first day jitters" on the first day of class? Most of us would agree that no matter how often we have taught a particular class, we experience some form of anxiety. Perhaps we may not have an abdomen fluttering with butterflies, but many of us do feel a tickle or two in our stomachs. If we still feel those butterflies on our first day of class, imagine how our students must feel. It is only human to experience some degree of anxiety when encountering most new situations, and humane for us to recognize and relieve the anxiety of our students by lessening their inhibitions in the multinational classroom.

I have always been interested in what motivates the successful language learner and have found that the first step in achieving any level of motivation is acceptance and trust. When students feel that they are accepted in a social situation, they begin to talk. I find that I am group-oriented and can be an effective communicator when I am introduced to new situations outside of my speech community. Although I may fool many of my colleagues, who think of me as an outgoing, high-spirited extrovert, most of the time I am scared to death, especially in situations where I do not know anyone. However,

by analyzing my own inhibitions, I have discovered ways of producing a classroom environment that is conducive to many different cultures and learning styles. Here are some examples of how I relieve anxiety in my multinational classrooms.

First, I am careful to be prepared for class. Lack of preparation increases my anxiety level, and I run the risk of projecting an unnecessary air of formality or authority when I feel I am teaching "on my toes" or "off the cuff". I know that if I want my students to feel less anxious, it is imperative that I project a friendly and understanding image. I begin the lesson with a smile, I always include myself in the classroom, and I never distance myself from the class by sitting behind the desk. My favorite seating arrangement of the class is around a conference-sized table. I like to treat my class like a family, and I feel that no matter where students are from, they can relate to the more collective sense of the family unit. Since I feel less anxiety when I am among

people that I know, I believe that students will get to know everyone quickly if they are around a table, and so will be less anxious.

In order to get to know everyone and develop a quick rapport, I put my classes through a series of icebreakers, such as "Find someone who ..." or classmate surveys. I encourage students to find similarities rather than differences between the various cultures of the classroom. "Finding differences is easy; identifying similarities is much more challenging," I tell them.

I also design communicative activities that promote reliance of students on each other in order to complete the tasks. These activities can alternate from pair to small groups. By the end of the first week of classes, everyone is on a first name basis with everyone else and feeling very comfortable in the class.

Role-plays can also be an effective way to free inhibitions. I usually start role play activities in the second week of class by first giving the students the tools they need for this kind of activity. They need comprehensive guidelines and examples of the activity, since it is unknown in the schools of many cultures. We all know that speaking in public elicits high stress and anxiety, and role-plays, for those who are unused to them, can certainly do that. While I am planning the role-  
*(continued on page 11)*



## Freeing inhibitions

(cont'd from pg. 10)

plays, I ask myself, "Would I do this in front of everyone?" I picture myself doing the activity.

Moreover, I actually participate in the role plays (which works especially well with those odd-numbered classes).

The most important thing for us as teachers to remember is that students don't want to lose acceptance. They especially need to build trust in this vulnerable period of their life. So, I don't expect them to do something silly, if I am not willing to do the same.

I have recently become an active participant in my advanced-level speaking and listening class. I prepare speeches as models for the course syllabus, and I take part in self-evaluations and peer-evaluations. The students are quite responsive to this "do as I do, not as I say" technique and feel free to offer suggestions to make my speeches more effective. I, in turn, enjoy the trusting relationship that the sharing and modeling builds with them.

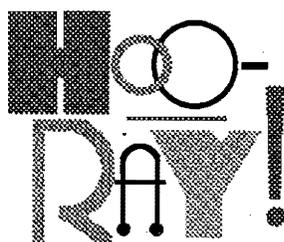
I have found these techniques especially effective at relieving the stress and anxiety of my students and myself in our multicultural classroom during the first few days of a new term. By being willing to modify my teaching philosophies and use the "butterflies" caused by anxiety and anticipation, it seems that every year I learn more and more about managing and focusing on the needs of my students to the benefit of all of us.

## Giving directions

(cont'd from pg. 7)

group reports given to the whole class at the next session. Some of the students really liked the chance to get out and talk to people on the street. Others liked the opportunity to work with each other. But some students did not like the activity at all for different reasons; for example, it wasn't useful for the TOEFL and it wasn't academic enough.

However, all agreed that they felt more of a need to communicate clearly during the exercise and generally felt more confident about getting and giving directions after the exercise. I strongly believe that the "realness" of this kind of exercise in teaching English language skills is important to the success of our learners, and the lessons they learn from them are important to their continuing success long after they leave our classrooms.



## The Marckwardt

### Award

The Michigan TESOL Marckwardt Award is a travel grant awarded annually to a graduate student to attend the TESOL Conference. This award is open to any graduate student who has applied for the TESOL Marckwardt but not won it. Instructions for applying are in the June/July *TESOL Matters*, and the deadline for their application is October 15. The deadline for the application for the MITESOL award is December 1. If you or anyone you know is interested in applying for next year's award to attend TESOL '98 in Seattle, please contact Sara Tipton, president of MITESOL, at Wayne State University for more information.

### New Web Coordinator

Miriam Seaver, the new web coordinator, has taken over from Claire Bradin and informs us that the new URL (address, I'm told) for the MITESOL web site has changed and is now:

<http://www.eli.wayne.edu/mitesol/>

Be sure to put this new address in your web site address book, and visit the page often to keep abreast of all the news that affects us as ESL professionals.

### New Web Address for MITESOL

<http://www.eli.wayne.edu/mitesol/>

**High impact  
orthographies**

(cont'd from pg. 8)

acquisition as a whole. Let's have more teachers pay attention to this area of their students' learning and more researchers work to develop more efficient ways of promoting fluency with the alphabetic code!

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