



2009 MinneTESOL Conference Keynote Speakers



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Director of the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA), and Distinguished Teaching Professor in English as a Second Language at the University of Minnesota



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How Research on Oral Language Can Inform Literacy Instruction in a Second Language

Prior literacy can play a powerful role in acquiring literacy in a new language, but how does prior literacy affect oral language development in a new language? In this two-part presentation, the presenters will briefly describe three second language acquisition (SLA) studies they carried out in Minneapolis with Somali adolescents and young adults who had low levels of alphabetic print literacy. Then the presenters will describe research in cognitive science carried out with monolingual illiterate adults and Chinese speakers, which shows that it is alphabetic literacy that causes phonological awareness, and not vice versa. The presenters will explore some of the direct implications of this work for the way emergent literacy skills should be developed.

Elaine E. Tarone

Elaine E. Tarone is Director of the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA), and Distinguished Teaching Professor in English as a Second Language at the University of Minnesota, where she has provided preparatory coursework for MA ESL students since 1979. Professor Tarone's research publications focus on the impact of social context and literacy level on oral second language processing, production, and acquisition. CARLA has been a Title VI Language Resource Center since 1993, and is known for its large web-site of resources for language teachers, its intensive summer institutes and conferences, its working papers and electronic newsletters.

Kit Hansen

Kit Hansen holds M.A.'s in Psycholinguistics and in English as a Second Language from the University of Minnesota. Her thesis research was on low literacy and second language oral acquisition. She teaches non-native speaker sections in composition in the Department of Writing Studies at the University of Minnesota where she also tutors in the Center for Writing. She has published with Professors Tarone and Bigelow in the TESOL Quarterly. Her research interests are in cognition, second language acquisition, and literacy.

Dr. Martha Bigelow

Dr. Martha Bigelow is an Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Minnesota. Her research focuses broadly on the schooling of immigrant and refugee students - their language learning, multilingualism, multiliteracies as well as ways they negotiate issues of "race", religion, gender and ethnicity in contexts both in and out of school. Her research interests are fueled by her many years as an English as a second teacher and her on-going collaborations with colleagues, language teachers, graduate students, community partners and English language learners.