

Promoting research and best practices to improve the use of English in the emerging global knowledge economy of the 21st century

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Research Organizations: Spotlight on Japanese Center — ARCLE

Editor's note: In the interest of sharing resources with our readers, TIRF will occasionally provide information about organizations concerned with language research. This month, we focus on ARCLE – an organization in Japan which promotes action research on English language teaching and learning.

The Action Research Center for Language Education (ARCLE) is affiliated with Benesse Corporation, but is an independent think tank which specializes in researching English language education in Japan. The Benesse Educational Research and Development Center conducts large-scale surveys in all areas of education, including English language education. (Although the ARCLE and Benesse websites are in Japanese, visitors can use Google Translate to learn about their activities in English.)

Each December, ARCLE co-sponsors a symposium on English language education with the Sophia Linguistics Institute for International Communication. There have been five such symposia to date and the

next one will be held in Tokyo on December 2, 2012. The theme of this year's symposium is yet to be decided, but it will be related to the new high school course of study, which will go into effect in April, 2013. One of the major concerns is the section in the guidelines which calls for all high school English teachers "as a general rule" to "teach English in English."



Ken Yoshida

TIRF Trustee Professor Kensaku Yoshida has been actively involved with ARCLE as its Director for the past nine years. He said, "ARCLE's goal is to provide not only theoretical but also practical suggestions to improve English language education in Japan through action research. We have a journal called the *ARCLE Review*, which we publish annually, and we hold research meetings several times a year." The journal can be [accessed online](#). Proceedings of the symposia as well as other research reports are [available by clicking here](#).

International Scholarships, Awards, and Grants Information



The Institute of Advanced Study at the University of Warwick, UK – Global Research Network is offering ten postdoctoral Global Research Fellowships for outstanding researchers. Each applicant needs to be nominated by an academic department. The Centre for Applied Linguistics welcomes enquiries from high-calibre applicants who have completed their PhDs in any area of applied linguistics that complements the centre's current research interests. [Click here](#) for more information.

If you would like to be considered for nomination by the Centre for Applied Linguistics, please email your curriculum vitae and a draft research proposal to [Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey](#), Director, no later than May 7, 2012.

TIRF's Doctoral Dissertation Grants Program is well underway. In fact, there are only two weeks left to apply for TIRF's 2012 Doctoral Dissertation Grants (DDG) competition. The call for proposals can be viewed on TIRF's website by [clicking here](#). General information on the DDG program can be [found here](#).

TIRF's Research Advisory Committee is actively seeking applications from qualified doctoral candidates – doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy and have had their doctoral research approved by their committee. Proposals must be related to TIRF's research priorities [\[click and scroll down\]](#). DDG awards are funded up to US \$5,000 and are open to students in doctoral programs from all over the world. There are no restrictions on citizenship or residency. If you know of doctoral students who may be interested

in applying, please share this information with them. The deadline for the receipt of DDG proposals is May 14, 2012.

The IELTS Joint-Funded Research Program 2012-2013 competition has begun. The IELTS partners (British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia, and Cambridge ESOL) are inviting applications for funding to undertake research in relation to IELTS. This year, the amount available for individual research projects has been raised to a maximum of £45,000/AUS\$70,000.

Studies which fit within the following broad areas are particularly encouraged: (1) test development and validation; (2) contexts of test use; and (3) test impact. Consideration will also be given to other issues of current interest in relation to IELTS.

Applications should be submitted by June 30, 2012. For further details, please [visit the program's homepage](#).



The Caroline Clapham IELTS Masters Award competition is now open. IELTS partners are pleased to invite applications for this award, which is given annually to the masters-level dissertation or thesis in English which makes the most significant contribution to the field of language

testing. The work should be language-testing focused but need not be IELTS related. The award carries a prize of £1,000. Applications should be submitted by June 30, 2012. For further details, please [visit the award's page](#).

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Kathleen Bailey,
Chair of TIRF

Upcoming Conferences Related to TIRF's Research Priorities

Mapping ESP Frontiers: Bridging Teaching, Research and Practice is a joint international conference set to take place December 13-16, 2012. The four-day event marks the First International Conference of the Chinese Association for ESP and the Fourth International Conference on ESP in Asia. The conference will be held at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in Hung Hom, Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR. For more details, please [visit the conference homepage](#).

Reflections on ELT from an ESP Perspective is the theme of the 2012 International Conference on English for Specific Purposes in Taiwan. To be held on October 26-27, 2012, the event will be housed at the International Conference Hall at Southern Taiwan University. The two-day event is being jointly organized by the Department of Applied English at Southern Taiwan University, the Taiwan ESP Association, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Southern Taiwan University, and the English Language Center.

Several topics related to the conference include (1) reflections on English pedagogy from an industrial perspective; (2) IT industry's needs and expectations

in foreign language training; (3) workplace English — demands and supplies; (5) reflections on ELT from an ESP perspective; (6) ESP corpus studies; (7) ESP teacher training; and (8) trends in ESP development. The due date for abstract submissions is July 16, 2012. For more information, please email [Dr. Woody Wu](#) or [Ms. Vicky Yu](#).

Evaluation of NLP-based Systems for L2 Learning and Assessment is the theme for the upcoming Technology for Second Language Learning (TSLL) Conference. The two-day event will be held September 21-22, 2012 at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. Jill Burstein (Educational Testing Service) and Paige Ware (Southern Methodist University), [a 2005 TIRF Priority Research Grant recipient](#), will be the plenary speakers at the conference.

The 2012 TSLL Conference will provide a forum for discussion of research investigating how natural language processing-based systems can be evaluated to inform their use in the teaching, learning, and assessment of writing. For more information, please [visit the conference homepage](#).

English at Work Paper Now Available; Slidecast Released

We are pleased to announce that TIRF's commissioned research paper, [English at Work: An Analysis of Case Reports about English Language Training for the 21st-century Workforce](#), by Tony Fitzpatrick and Robert O'Dowd, is now available to download. The [executive summary](#) of the paper will continue to be available on TIRF's website as well.

We would like to thank Ms. Meredith Morgan, who is responsible for the expert layout and design of both the executive summary and complete version of the paper. We would also like to extend our appreciation to Ms. Hadley Chatel at National Geographic Learning for

her careful coordination of the production stages of the manuscript. And a great many thanks are due to National Geographic Learning and Trustee Dennis Hogan for their sponsorship of the production of the paper.

For any individual who missed TIRF's presentation last month at the TESOL Convention, you may now [watch the slidecast from the event](#). (In general, a slidecast features a PowerPoint presentation with the speaker's recorded voice to accompany the slides.) The entire presentation, which includes a question-and-answer session at the end of the talk, can be found on [TIRF's SlideShare account](#).

TIRF Grant Recipients Honored

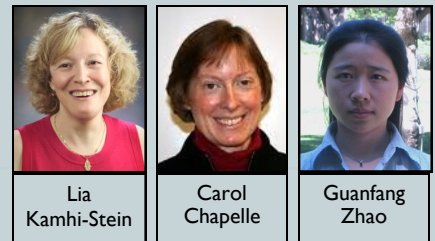
Three TIRF grant recipients were honored at recent conferences. At the 2012 TESOL Convention in Philadelphia, Dr. Lia Kamhi-Stein, [a Priority Research Grant recipient from 2003](#), received TESOL's "Outstanding Teacher" award. Originally from Argentina, Dr. Kamhi-Stein is a professor at California State University.

At the 2012 Language Testing Research Colloquium in Princeton, Dr. Carol Chapelle, [a Priority Research Grant recipient from 2004](#), received the Cambridge/ILTA "Lifetime Achievement Award" for her extensive work on language assessment. Dr. Chapelle teaches at Iowa State University.

Finally, Dr. Cecelia Guanfang Zhao, [a Doctoral Dissertation Grant winner in 2009](#), received the

"Jacqueline Ross TOEFL Dissertation Award" for the study that TIRF funding helped her complete. Dr. Zhao teaches at Shanghai International Studies University.

Congratulations to these outstanding scholars!



Lia
Kamhi-Stein

Carol
Chapelle

Guanfang
Zhao

Report from the Chair — A Month of Special Days

It is widely known that April Fool's Day is celebrated in some countries on April 1st. But did you know that there are a surprising number of curious other remembrances in April?

Some April dates have to do with food. For example, some people celebrate National Peanut Butter and Jelly Day (the 2nd), Caramel Popcorn Day (the 7th), National Eggs Benedict Day (the 16th), and National Pretzel Day (the 26th). Other April dates have to do with professions and pastimes. These include Hug a Newsman Day (the 4th), National Librarians' Day (the 16th), Scrabble Day (the 13th),

and Golfers' Day (the 10th).

Two April days are closely related to TIRF's work: April 20th is Volunteer Recognition Day, and April 25th is Administrative Professionals Day. So let me take this opportunity to thank TIRF's volunteers, including all those people who have read grant proposals for TIRF over the years. I'd also like to thank all TIRF's Trustees, past and present, who have given their time, money, and expertise to keep the Foundation going strong. For any of our readers who have contributed reference lists or other resources, or shared information about TIRF with their colleagues, your efforts

are appreciated as well. And if it weren't for our wonderful Executive Assistant, Ryan Damerow, we would not have our monthly newsletter, our updated website, our slidecasts and the excellent stewardship of our records that we enjoy. This last point is particularly important right now because April is "Records and Information Management Month."

Whatever holidays you observe, I hope April has been a productive and celebratory month for you.

Kathi Bailey