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Second Language Acquisition and Teaching GIDP

I am glad that I have attended the 40th annual TESOL convention and exhibit held in March in Tampa, Florida. TESOL, arguably the largest and most influential organization for teachers of English to speakers of other languages, attracts more than 2000 presenters and participants from all over the world this year.

This year the theme is: Daring to Lead. Teachers and researchers much be leaders of language teaching and learning. The event lasted 4 days with hundreds of sessions of presentations, posters and workshops. The topic covers almost all topics in the field of language teaching such as grammar, vocabulary, writing, listening, teacher training, computer assisted language teaching.

What strikes me most is that audience are very professional and gave constructive feedback about what you presented. Especially, in the Doctors' Forum I participated, I met the advisor that the forum assigned to my paper (Each paper was assigned an expert teacher for this forum). She was very helpful in helping me find the potential problems of the research I presented. She gave me a lot of good suggestions and encouraged me to do follow-up studies. Also a lot of experienced mentors were there and gave us a heads-up about the difficulties and pitfalls during a thesis preparation especially from the aspect of research methodology. A good design saves tons of time. She also reminded me that networking was very important. She recommended some teachers to me when I told her other research topics that I am interested in. I was very lucky to have her as my advisor at the convention. We will keep on touch with each other.

Another interesting aspect is that teachers who attend the conference are very practice-oriented. They are classroom teachers and they are very interested in those researches that help them make better decision in their teaching. For example when to introduce new vocabulary, how fast listening materials should be. This reminds me that research and application should be connected. There is no room for doing research for the sake of research in applied linguistics.

In a word, I have benefited a lot from attending such a professional conference. I have met experts in our field and got advice from them. In fact, the paper for the conference was accepted by a magazine after I returned. I hope I will attend such great conferences in the near future. Finally, I appreciate the help of the Herbert E. Carter Travel Award Program making it happen.