

## **President's Message for AM 2008 Publication**

### ***Teaching Languages in a Changing World: Rethinking Literacies and Learners***

The ability to communicate with people who speak a language different from ours is as intriguing as stepping outside our own personal space to observe ourselves in the alter ego we carry within. Teaching a second language allows us to share this wonderful quality with our students, while we endeavor, daily, to pique their interest and desire to further their studies in the subject matter that is our *raison d'être*. It's not an easy task, and yet each day we find ourselves in front of our students with the same exuberant enthusiasm of our first day in a classroom, regardless of how the previous day may have unfolded.

Every September we return to school ready to meet the daily challenges and start anew, with new classes, some new faces, a different curriculum: Elements that change from year to year, but that we always expect and adopt as the natural course of pedagogical events. And yet, although we don't pay much attention to other subtleties, these become part of our familiar landscape, altering it, almost imperceptibly, without us being aware. Suffices to look back at the last few years to realize how many changes have taken place. Our students dress differently, they sometimes communicate with each other, and with us, in ways and with words that we don't always understand.

Our world is changing at breakneck speed. Mass communication, instantaneous written and visual correspondence from one side of the world to the other, often via hand-held minuscule electronic devices, compel us to rethink the way we deliver our message. The traditional methodology that for many years has worked so well, may not be as effective as in the past, nor lead our students to achieve what we always expected from their peers of years before. It may be that those subtle changes are, in fact, building obstacles between our time-tested methodology and their acquisition and retention of content matter.

This year's Annual Meeting theme delves into this and other related issues via the many workshops that will stimulate discussion and further help us examine those pedagogical elements that enhance learning in a changing world and broaden the phenomenon of second language acquisition.

My best wishes for an enjoyable and worthwhile experience at this year's NYSAFLT Annual Meeting!