

ISSN 1747-5600

Volume No.67 Winter 2008/2009

# RaPAL

Research and Practice in Adult Literacy

**This edition  
celebrates the  
2008 RaPAL  
Conference  
in Galway**

**Winter  
2009**

## The Research and Practice in Adult Literacy Network

### Who we are

RaPAL is an independent national network of learners, teachers, managers and researchers engaged in adult literacies and numeracy. Our support is generated by membership subscription only, and we are therefore completely independent in our views. RaPAL is the only national organisation focusing on the role of literacies in adult life.

### What we do

- **campaign** for the rights of adults to have access to the full range of literacies in their lives
- **critique** current policy and practice where it is based on simplistic notions of literacy as skill
- **emphasise** the importance of social context in literacy
- **encourage** collaborative and reflective research
- **believe** in democratic practices in adult literacy
- **create** networks by organising events (including an annual conference) to contribute to national debate
- **publish** a journal three times a year

### RaPAL Officers 2008-2009

Chair	Amy Burgess, University of Lancaster
Secretary	Tara Furlong, College of North West London
Treasurer	Irene Schwab, Institute of Education
Journal Co-ordinator	Yvon Appleby, University of Central Lancashire
Production Editor	Sarah Rennie, Sunderland University
Membership Secretary	Kathryn James, University of Lancaster
Website Manager	Mary Hamilton, University of Lancaster
Reviews Editor	Ellayne Fowler, Open University

### Editorial Information

The Editorial Group for 2008-2009 includes the following researchers, practitioners and practitioner researchers: Yvon Appleby, Sue Bates, Amy Burgess, Maxine Burton, Ellayne Fowler, Tara Furlong, Barbara Hately-Broad, Mary Hamilton, Kieran Harrington, Gaye Houghton, Fiona Macdonald, Colleen Molloy, Bex Ferriday and Sarah Rennie. Overseas members of the Editorial Group include: Jean Searle, Rosie Wickert, Stephen Black, Australia; Mary Norton, Bonnie Soroake, Sheila Stewart, Canada; Janet Isserlis, Elsa Auerbach, Steve Reder, USA; and Cathy Kell, New Zealand

Members are involved in the compilation of the journal as reviewers/referees and editors.

We are a friendly group - open to new members and new ideas. Please contact us with any contributions (views, comments, reports and articles) and do not be put off if you are new to the field or if you have not written for a publication before. This Journal is written by and for all learners, tutors and researchers who want to ask questions about this field of work. It does not matter if the questions have been asked before. We want to reflect the many voices within adult literacy and numeracy work and to encourage debate. Why not join in?

**Further information can be found at our website: [www.rapal.org.uk](http://www.rapal.org.uk)**

The RaPAL Journal expresses a variety of views which do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial group.

The RaPAL Journal has been printed by Image Printing Co., Lumsdale, Matlock, Derbyshire. Matlock, Derbyshire.

# Contents

<b>Editorial</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Amy Burgess and Kieran Harrington</i>	
<b>The RaPAL Conference</b>	<b>2</b>
<i>Yasmin Barry</i>	
<b>Reflections, critical and otherwise</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Sandie Stratford, Lesley Crawford and Jolene Hamill</i>	
<b>Another time, another place</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>Mary Rhind</i>	
<b>Literacies Café blog</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Tracey Mollins</i>	
<b>'Bringin' the boys onboard: the role of reading aloud and learner publications in engaging hard to reach learners</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>George Hay, Paul Carberry and Sean Hurl</i>	
<b>Family Learning as a way of engaging adult learners</b>	<b>11</b>
<i>Mary Flanagan</i>	
<b>Student Exhibitions: Creating Spaces for Inclusive Learning</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>Shelley Tracey and Nessa Skeffington</i>	
<b>Email in both the actual and virtual literacy classroom</b>	<b>15</b>
<i>Ellayne Fowler</i>	
<b>Engaging Young People with literacies Learning: a Scottish perspective. Reporting on a workshop provided at the RaPAL Conference 2008</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Shelia Doogan and Lewis Atha</i>	
<b>Functional Literacy: a new idea or déjà vu?</b>	<b>25</b>
<i>Amy Burgess, Mary Hamilton and Roz Ivanič</i>	
<b>Showing up and seeing what happens: A reflection on lesson planning and process in adult education</b>	<b>30</b>
<i>David Kirwan</i>	
<b>Writing for the RaPAL Journal</b>	<b>34</b>
<i>Yvon Appleby</i>	
<b>'Why don't they speak English?', 'Why can't they speak English?', 'Why won't they speak English?' and 'Whose English is it anyway?'</b>	<b>36</b>
<i>Sheila Rosenburg</i>	
<b>An OPQ of a life in RaPAL: A Retrospective</b>	<b>45</b>
<i>Roz Ivanič</i>	
<b>RaPAL Conference Evaluations</b>	<b>51</b>
<i>Lesley Crawford, Fiona Watters and Julie Collins</i>	
<b>Reviews – A critical history of ESOL in the UK 1870 – 2006</b>	<b>52</b>
<i>Reviewed by Angela Smith</i>	
<b>Grave Tales from Glasgow</b> <i>Reviewed by Mark Girdlestone</i>	
<b>QIA/CEL Summer Conference</b> <i>Review by Katy Bolt</i>	
<b>Celebration of John Glynn's Life</b>	<b>54</b>
<i>Peter Goode</i>	

# Editorial

The theme of RaPAL's 2008 conference was Inclusion and Engagement in Adult Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL and it took place in June at the National University of Ireland, Galway. It was RaPAL's largest conference to date, with 150 delegates attending from the Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Northern Ireland, England, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and Australia. The inclusive nature of the conference and of RaPAL itself was evident in the variety of workshops on offer. Some focused mainly on practice, some mainly on research. Some provided delegates with an opportunity for reflection, others encouraged more active involvement. One or two, we are told, even became quite rowdy! We think this variety is also reflected in the content of the contributions to this issue of the journal, as well as in the range of formats and styles the writers have chosen.

This conference represented the beginning of a new phase for RaPAL: it was our first conference outside the UK and it

marked the start of what we hope will be a long and close association with many colleagues in Ireland. It also represented an ending, because it was the occasion on which we said goodbye to one of our founder members, Roz Ivanic, who retired in the summer. Roz gave the closing keynote address, the text of which is printed here. Her 'OPQ of a Life in RaPAL' contains some moving personal reflections and reaffirms powerfully for all of us what we stand for and why we do what we do. We would like to thank Roz on behalf of all RaPAL members, past and present, for her friendship, support and inspiration over the years and to wish her a long, healthy and happy retirement.

Finally we would like to say thank you to everyone who has written in this issue of the journal; reading the contributions has reminded us again of what an enjoyable and successful conference it was.

*Amy Burgess and Kieran Harrington*