CATESOL NEWSLETTER

### SERVING TEACHERS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Letter from the CATESOL President

Dear CATESOL Family,

It has been a year since I shared my first President's message with you. Reflecting on 2024, I am deeply grateful for the opportunities to work with CATESOL members and leadership. This past year has been filled with growth and countless moments of appreciation.

Last month, CATESOL welcomed a new Board of Directors and our President-Elect, Dr. Popal. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our 2023–2024 board members for their contributions and warmly welcome the 2024–2025 board as we continue our journey together.

The CATESOL 2024 State Conference, Empowering Voices: Bridging Communities through Civic Learning and Digital Literacies, was a tremendous success! Being surrounded by many passionate colleagues and mentors at CATESOL 2024 gave me renewed hope and encouragement as we enter 2025 with uncertainty. A huge thank-you goes to the Conference Committee members, volunteers, presenters, attendees, sponsors, exhibitors, and advertisers who made the event possible. I am excited to share that since September 2024, we have welcomed 120 new members to CATESOL.
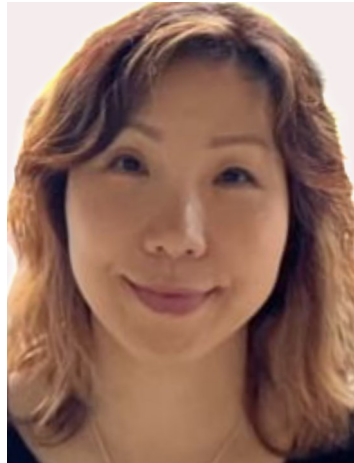
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Lastly, I am thrilled for the CATESOL Education Foundation (CEF)'s new leadership. I look forward to strengthening our partnership as we continue our shared mission of serving TESOL professionals and educators.

As we reflect on 2024 and step into 2025 with a commitment to serving our students and communities, I want you to know that CATESOL is ready to serve you and your needs.

I wish you a joyful holiday season and a happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Song Hong, CATESOL President 2023-2025

Words from the Editor

Kara Mac Donald

The Feature is a recap of the 2024 CATESOL State Conference, followed by the Focus Feature about the CATESOL Education Foundation, who they are and what they do and more. The issue has an update on the CATESOL Journal, with the publication of the most recent Special Theme issue, a call for general issue submissions opening in January 2025 and other information. We have a CIRT-IG report that follows, with a TOP-IG and RW-IG report later in the issue. We also have a LGBTQ+-IG report from a student. There is the repeat publication of a member update from the CATESOL Newsletter editors on the newsletter's health developments and that members have made the growth possible with their interest in sharing content on a variety of topics and in varying formats. Another short piece by the editors on the recently added alternative format for the CATESOL Blog Monthly Book Reviews to make it more accessible for members that are not yet familiar with doing standard book review and can submit a short summary and why they liked the text. The Teachers as Language Leaners column has a article on the authors experiences as learners. We have a short 'teaser' submission from a member who attended her first CATESOL conference and shares some insight into her experiences and excitement to share more in an article in the March issue. We have a second Member Submission addressing tips for technology use in the classroom. There is another article for Language Teachers as Language Learners, sharing the author's experiences as a Mandarin Chinese student. Although the newsletter is directly and indirectly classroom instruction, there is an article on 'Activities of the Classroom', newly launched in this issue. We have the third article submission in the Teacher Trainer series on classroom observation. We have an ad on CATESOL Community of Transformative Circles, which may be of interest to many.

This issue, again, offers a variety of content for all members to find something of interest to them. We, as editors, hope you have a wonderful holiday season and find some down time to browse and/or read this issue of the newsletter.

Happy Holidays from Kara Mac Donald and Amy Small, and the new copy layout proof reader, Siyi (Lois) Gao.

Feature — CATESOL 2024 State Conference – Debrief Letter from the Conference Chair and CATESOL President

Bahiyyih Hardacre, Conference Chair and Song Hong, CATESOL President

Last month we came together for the CATESOL 2024 State Conference at California State University Los Angeles. This year's theme was "*Empowering Voices: Bridging Communities through Civic Learning and Digital Literacies." We felt this was a timely and highly relevant topic, one that would draw the interest of our members and conference attendees. We had positive confirmation that it was indeed the case as during the conference attendees kept approaching us to tell us how much they enjoyed the plenary talks and sessions they had attended.*

We brought to you plenary speakers who are leading voices in their fields. Dr. Antero Garcia, an associate professor of Education at Stanford University, in his presentation titled "*Shift, Return, & Heal: Building Justice from Within Our Classrooms," explored contemporary contexts for supporting diverse classrooms for justice-centered learning. Building on examples ranging from youth literacy practices on public school buses to ethical storytelling activities with immigrant communities, Dr. Garcia offered examples for educators and the necessary questions that must guide our field.*

Dr. Uju Anya, an associate professor of Second Language Acquisition at Carnegie Mellon, in her presentation titled, "*The AfroMetaverse as Black Placemaking for Racial Justice in TESOL," talked about her current project, AfroMetaverse, which illustrates the applicability of critical race pedagogy for world language teaching (CRPWLT) and addresses Austin and Anya's (2024) call for Black Linguistic Reparations to address the history of harm against Afrodescendants in language study by centering the experiences and success of Black students to inform curriculum, instruction, policy, and teacher training for racial justice in TESOL and multilingual education. In her talk, she provided details on the project's current development, timeline, collaborations with international partners in racial justice and global education, and prospects for empirical research to assess the impact of engaging in this site of Black placemaking.*

Dr. Mark Warschauer, a distinguished professor of Education at University of California at Irvine, in his presentation titled, "*AI in Second Language Education: Grabbing the Bull by the Horns," argued that Generative AI stands as one of the most powerful technologies of communication that the world has yet seen, but one that is especially challenging to harness, especially in second language learning contexts. His presentation discussed approaches to incorporate generative AI in second language classrooms that can successfully foster writing skills, language development, and critical AI literacy for academic and career success. He shared with us his current project at UCI called PapyrusAI, which is an educational tool his team developed to help students with their writing and AI literacy by allowing them to learn to engineer their prompts and fine tune their writing assignments.*

We were also proud to showcase some other stellar speakers. Dr. Luciana de Oliveira, past TESOL president (and first Latina in the role) and a professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Virginia Commonwealth University, in her talk titled, "*Civics Learning Through Language," talked about how civics education in the United States focuses on people's political participation in a democratic society and is* crucial for helping multilingual learners develop civic competence in their new community. She argued that a language-based approach to content instruction can help teachers better support their students in learning civics.

Dr. Manisha Javeri, a leading academic in Educational Technology and a professor at Cal State LA, in her talk titled, "*AI-Enhanced Learning: Innovations, Ethics, and the Future of Education," explored the emerging role of AI in enhancing student engagement, personalizing learning pathways, and supporting educators in diverse instructional settings. With innovations ranging from intelligent tutoring systems* (Cont.)

Feature — (Cont.)

adaptive learning platforms, Dr. Javeri explained that AI offers unprecedented opportunities for tailored educational experiences that address the unique needs of learners, but she cautioned us to consider the ethical considerations of our educational practices.

Jeff Hutcheson, TESOL Director for Advocacy and Public Policy, in his talk titled, *"Advocacy & Policy: From the Local to the Global"* talked about advocacy and policy engagement of TESOL, initiating efforts across communities and countries in support of the English language teaching profession and the learners that we serve.

We had a rich program containing presentations, panels, and workshops aligned with the conference theme. Over the three days of the conference, Thursday being virtual and Friday and Saturday in-person, we hosted 194 sessions. Over two hundred presenters shared their expertise and knowledge with our CATESOL community. Sessions engaged the audience in collegial conversations on topics that are extremely relevant to the language teaching profession, ranging from what it means to be literate in today's digital technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR) to the incorporation of such tools as well as imagination, play, and civics into our practice to transform teaching and learning. As teachers, we all strive to provide our students with the tools they need to not only develop their communicative skills but also to develop a curious mindset and the ability to interact effectively with others, improve their communities, and participate in society.

The President's Reception on Friday night was well-attended and those who stayed for it enjoyed the soft and pleasant Brazilian music performed by Caro Pierotto's band. Hors d'oeuvres were served and we hosted an open bar. It was a great evening to linger a little longer and catch up with and/or make new friends.

This year, CATESOL Past President Anthony Burik was the recipient of the Sadae Iwataki award. The recipient of this award is carefully selected at the discretion of the CATESOL board of directors and is announced by the CATESOL President at the annual state CATESOL conference. The Sadae Iwataki Award represents the highest honor of the CATESOL association.

We must not forget to thank the sponsors, exhibitors, and advertisers who made the conference possible. We appreciate their generous sponsorship and presence during the conference.

Finally, 436 ratings on the conference app *Sched rated the conference 9.7/10, and the 108 post-conference satisfaction survey answers rated the conference 4.2/5. Averaging 9.3, we interpret these scores as representing a range from "satisfied" to "very satisfied" with the conference overall. There is no better reward for our hard work than hearing from people who attended the conference that they enjoyed it, and that they saw good value in attending it. But we could not have put such a great conference together without the help of an amazing group of people who volunteered their time and experience to help us bring it all together. Making a conference of this size happen at a university campus involves a lot of work, patience, perseverance, and very good communication skills. This group of people put in hours of serious hard work without any compensation; they did it because of their commitment to the CATESOL organization and their love for the field of language teaching. A big thank you to the members of the conference committee: Amanda Simons, Andy Mardesich, Anthony Alaimalo, Anthony Burik, Bahiyyih Hardacre, Bently Cavazzi, Dyan Collings Ralph, Ellie Kuznetsova, Emily Wong, Jeremiah Hong, Kara Mac Donald, Kate Jensen, Kelly Metz-Matthews, Margi Wald, Marsha Chan, Michelle Buell, Natasha Guerrero, Olga Evans, Robyn Mosely, Ryane Willis, Sara HIrata, Song Hong, Suky Kaur, Susan Gaer, Talley Caruso, Tammy Wik, and Zsa Zsa Aranas. We also owe a big thank you to all the volunteers who* helped us on-site during the event.

Feature — (Cont.)

The planning for the CATESOL 2025 has begun. It will be in Northern California, and we hope to share more details as soon as we confirm the dates. We look forward to seeing you at CATESOL 2025!

With much appreciation,

Bahiyyih Hardacre, CATESOL 2024 Conference Chair

Song Hong, CATESOL President 2023-2025

Past Presidents and Sadae Iwataki winners

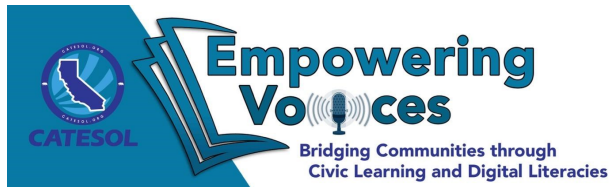### Celebrating Leadership Pasty and Present.

Bahiyyih Hardacre, 2024 Conference Chair

Feature — (Cont.)

The conference is a time for professional development and networking, as well as connecting with old time friends and making new ones.

Access to Everything CATESOL

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CATESOL Youtube Channel

CATESOL

@catesol_youtube · 92 subscribers · 85 videos

CATESOL, founded in 1969, is a nonprofit organization open to anyone concerned

catesol.org and 2 more links

Subscribe

If you wish a CATESOL event or want to access past information,

Check out the CATESOL Youtube Channel.

Access the site HERE

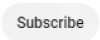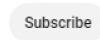**Great Channels to Visit!**

TESOL International Association	OTAN (Outreach and Technical	Ellii for Teachers (formerly ESL
6.01K subscribers	923 subscribers	2.69K subscribers
Subscribe	Subscribe	Subscribe

Focus Feature — CATESOL Educations Foundation:
Who We Are, What Benefits We Provide, and How You Can Help!

Song Hong, CATESOL President & Margi Wald, CATESOL Education Foundation Board

The CATESOL board and the [CATESOL Education Foundation](#) (CEF) are pleased to announce CEF board members for 2024-2025:

- President: Susan Gaer
- Vice President: Nirmla Flores
- Secretary: Kerry Chow
- Treasurer: Judy Hu
- CATESOL Organization Board Liaison: Song Hong
- Directors-at-large:
- Erika Saito (Assistant Secretary)
- Emily Wong (Awards Coordinator)
- Margi Wald (Strategic Communications Coordinator)

What is the CATESOL Education Foundation?

CEF's primary role as the fundraising arm of CATESOL is to support the advancement of CATESOL's educational goals:

- preparing teachers of multilingual English learners by providing educational opportunities and funding for further professional development,
- informing the general public about the strengths and needs of multilingual learners, and
- promoting the appreciation of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The foundation accepts [tax-deductible donations](#) to its general fund or targeted donations for particular purposes: CATESOL awards, grants, memberships, conferences, and different regional chapter events.

What Benefits Can I Take Advantage of?

CATESOL Awards Coordinated by CEF

Every year, CEF coordinates a number of awards for CATESOL members and the students they serve.

All Levels/Contexts:
- Stephen Sloan Memorial Fund
- Ron Lee Technology Award

College / University Instructors:
- English Language Research Award

Community College Students and Instructors:
- Student Essay Award (sponsored by Townsend Press)
- Professional Development Award

Adult Instructors:
- Sam Price Foundation Professional Development Award

Focus Feature—(Cont.)

Graduate Students:
- Rick Sullivan State Conference Registration Award

Part-time Instructors:
- Gordon Johnson CATESOL Membership Award

Watch the CEF Awards webpage for 2025 information and deadlines. And see the 2024 CATESOL Award Winners padlet to learn more about awardees' projects.

CEF-Sponsored Grants

Additionally, CEF sponsors grants that provide ongoing training and materials development for instructors.

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Grant: This grant's goals include training educators of multilingual learners in best practices for promoting DEIA within their classroom, centers, schools, and districts; inspiring these educators to share training takeaways with their communities of practice; and assisting them in proposing and preparing a poster/paper/panel submissions for a CATESOL professional development event or publication.

- Joseph O'Loughlin Memorial Grant: Focused on creating a study group for four to five teachers per year, this grant aims to help K-12 teachers to work with their multilingual students who are new to the U.S. school system and have had interrupted or limited schooling opportunities in their native country.

Consider applying for an award or grant – and please advertise these exciting opportunities with colleagues through your social media and institutional routing lists

How Can I Donate?

Donate directly on our webpage: Your tax-deductible donation will support professional development opportunities for TESOL (pre-)professionals: graduate students, pre-service teachers, instructors, advocates, researchers, and program administrators. You can donate by check, via paypal, or with a credit card. See our Donations webpage for directions.

Consider a legacy gift: Contact Margi Wald at catesoleducationfoundation@gmail.com for more information.

Look out for fundraisers throughout the year: The CATESOL Education Foundation runs a silent auction at the CATESOL State Conference, a #GivingTuesday fundraiser through Facebook (It's not too late to give!), and targeted events – like a wine-tasting event in the works!

How Else Can I Get Involved?

Volunteer as an award coordinator: Emily Wong, CEF Awards Coordinator, catesolawards@gmail.com, is actively seeking people to help coordinate specific awards. This is a great way to get involved, take on a manageable role, and start on your leadership trajectory.

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Focus Feature—(Cont.)

<u>Help market CEF events and benefits:</u> CEF is currently looking for people to support our website and social media platforms. Contact Susan Gaer at <u>catesoleducationfoundation@gmail.com</u> if you are interested in joining the team.

<u>Work on a fundraising event or campaign:</u> Sponsor a Facebook campaign, suggest a one-time or re-curring fundraising option (like the wine-tasting event noted above), volunteer to help organize an existing event.

Your Turn

CATESOL and The CATESOL Education Foundation are volunteer- and member-run organizations. They work to support members but both need member input and support to work. We hope you will take advantage of the opportunities the CATESOL and the Foundation provide, and we also hope that you will consider giving back.

<u>CATESOL Education Foundation</u> is registered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions to the CATESOL Education Foundation are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. Our tax identification number is 20-8464092. Donations made to the CATESOL Education Foundation are tax-deductible as charitable contributions (Tax ID Number 20-8464092).   Your donation is made through PayPal. You do not need to be a member of Pay Pal to use it.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Donate >

The CATESOL Education Foundation does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, military or language orientation status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to board members, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services and awards. We are committed to providing an equitable, inclusive, welcoming environment for all members of our volunteers, vendors, and clients.

Donate

Making a Difference in the Lives of Multilingual Learners

![The CATESOL Journal]

UC Berkeley

The CATESOL Journal recently published its most recent Special Theme issue, Interactive, and Intelligent Uses of Technology in Multilingual Classrooms, with Lis Kamhi-Stein and Sharin Jacob as issue editors. Take some time to explore the articles for your enjoyment, instructional practice and professional development. HERE.

Volume 35, Issue 1, 2024 ▾

Volume 35.1

Editor's Note

Introduction to the Special Theme issue "Innovative, Interactive, and Intelligent Uses of Technology in Multilingual Classrooms"

Kamhi-Stein, Lía; Jacob, Sharin

The CATESOL Journal is also seeking a Book/Media Review Editor. If you have experience as a reviewer and can provide assistance to the journal by compiling and editing 5-6 book/media reviews per year, please contact the editorial staff at catesoljournal@gmail.com

The CATESOL Journal will be opening a call for submissions to a general issue (i.e., not Special Theme issue) in January 2025. Submission information- HERE

The CATESOL Journal - Call for Proposals

The CATESOL Journal is the official journal of CATESOL. It is a refereed academic journal published twice a year. The CATESOL Journal is listed in Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA), and the full text is available through the EBSCO's Education Source database. Articles in The CATESOL Journal focus on theory, research, pedagogy, and educational policy related to the teaching of English to speakers of other languages, including US-born bilinguals, Generation 1.5 students, immigrants, and international students. Articles may focus on any educational level, from kindergarten to university, as well as on adult school and workplace literacy settings.

The CATESOL Journal -- Seeking Book/Media Review Editor

Support CATESOL and its teachers, teacher educators, and researchers by becoming a part of our team!

The CATESOL Journal is actively seeking a book/media review editor. If you have experience as a reviewer and can provide assistance to the journal by compiling and editing 5-6 book/media reviews per year, please contact the editorial staff at catesoljournal@gmail.com.

The Journal is also seeking individuals who can join our team to help review article manuscripts. Please contact the editorial staff at catesoljournal@gmail.com if you can provide assistance.

Corpus Informed Research & Teaching Interest Group[12] Report — Applications of the Register-Functional Approach to Grammatical Complexity to Academic Writing Instruction

Bernard Cassie and Shelley Staples

Abstract

Linguistic complexity is a valuable construct for tracking second language development in writing and speaking. By analyzing lexico-grammatical patterns in learner texts through the Register-Functional (RF) approach, which emphasizes the role of register in determining how linguistic structures are used, researchers and teachers can gain valuable insights into developmental trends of learners that can guide the development and implementation of targeted pedagogical interventions.

Linguistic complexity has emerged as a valuable construct for investigating second language development in both writing and speaking. The analysis of linguistic complexity, particularly in the context of writing pedagogy, provides valuable insights for developing effective teaching strategies. By examining the structural and syntactic patterns in learner texts, researchers and instructors can identify key developmental trends that help shape targeted pedagogical interventions and instructional approaches. An approach to examining linguistic complexity is the Register-Functional (RF) approach (Biber et al., 2011) which emphasizes the role of register — the context and purpose of communication — in shaping how linguistic structures are employed. Unlike traditional methods of examining linguistic complexity that prioritize clausal complexity and rely on broad measures such as T-units (Hunt, 1965), the RF approach focuses on linguistic features that are specific to each register. In the context of academic writing, this includes an emphasis on phrasal complexity such as nominalizations and noun phrase modifiers, which are more prevalent in academic discourse than in conversational contexts. By investigating how grammatical form aligns with communicative functions within a given register, the RF approach offers a more context-sensitive framework for understanding linguistic complexity.

Biber et al.'s (2011) model hypothesizes that writers progress from using grammatical features common in conversation to those characteristic of academic discourse. Subsequent research by Gray et al. (2019) and Staples et al. (2016, 2022) has shown that as students' proficiency and academic level increase, their writing exhibits more phrasal complexity features and fewer clausal complexity features. When teaching writing in higher education, it is crucial to recognize that per Biber et al.'s (2011) hypothesized stages of grammatical complexity development, most first-year students are not at the initial stage. The initial stage is characterized by the use of finite complement clauses controlled by very common verbs such as know, think. Instead, these students use more of the features at the second stage than more advanced academic writers. This stage is marked by finite complement clauses controlled by a wider set of verbs including forgotten, imagine, finite conditional clauses and simple phrasal embedding. At this stage, students are ready to begin refining their use of more advanced linguistic features at later stages, particularly phrasal complexity features (premodifying nouns, prepositional phrases as noun modifiers) and clauses that modify nouns (noun complement clauses and relative clauses).

Staples' (forthcoming) book on first-year writing, as well as other complexity studies, such as Biber et al. (2021) and Staples et al. (2016), reveal significant differences in lexico-grammatical and syntactic complexity across genres, including Literacy Narratives, Ar- (Cont.)

gumentative Papers, and Synthesis tasks that students engage in for their writing classes at the college level. Writers use different grammatical structures when engaging in different genres; for instance, research reports often use dense noun phrases, including premodifying nouns to convey complex information succinctly, whereas narrative writing relies more on clausal structures such as subordinate clauses to elaborate on events (Staples et al., 2016, 2022). To address these differences, instructors can provide genre-specific guidance to highlight the function of grammatical features within the genres that students are expected to engage with in a higher education writing class. This targeted strategy helps students develop an adaptive understanding of linguistic complexity and thus encourages a latent awareness of how to adjust writing styles to suit different genres and rhetorical contexts. Such latent awareness, which enables writers to intuitively adapt their language choices when shifting between genres, is a critical skill for both L2 and L1 writers–even proficient L1 writers must learn how to navigate these shifts effectively. By developing this awareness through explicit instruction and practice, educators can support students in developing the flexibility needed to meet the demands of diverse writing tasks at the college level.

In higher education writing classes, students come from a range of disciplines and teaching writing across disciplines requires acknowledging and addressing the distinct patterns of grammatical complexity that characterize writing within different academic fields. In particular, the social sciences and life sciences demonstrate notable variation in their use of premodifying nouns and complex noun phrases (Staples et al., 2022). A scaffolded approach to teaching these discipline-specific features begins with raising students' awareness through hands-on analysis of authentic academic texts from their fields. By examining articles from their disciplines, students can identify and understand how these grammatical patterns function in context. This strategy is especially impactful when instructors incorporate materials relevant to students' areas of study and thus, can make the learning experience more meaningful and personally engaging. Collaborative analysis of these texts, whether among students from similar or diverse disciplines, can promote a deeper understanding of grammatical patterns and enhances students' ability to transfer this knowledge to various writing contexts. By bridging the gap between general academic writing and discipline-specific expectations, this approach can help students develop the rhetorical and grammatical awareness needed for success in academic writing. When such analysis is followed by scaffolded activities that connect these insights to practical writing tasks, students can be better prepared to apply these skills in broader academic and professional contexts.

To effectively frame the pedagogical context for students at varying proficiency levels, educators might consider focusing on raising their own awareness of these developmental stages and how they align with the genres and contexts in which students are writing. Rather than simply encouraging students to move from using finite or nonfinite verb complement clauses to noun complement clauses for the sake of increasing complexity in students' writing, instruction could emphasize the functional role these features play in different discourse contexts. For instance, students can be guided to consider why a noun complement clause might be more appropriate for academic writing that requires precision and abstraction, whereas verb complement clauses may suit more narrative or personal writing contexts. This guided approach helps students understand the rhetorical motivations behind linguistic choices and therefore makes them more adaptable and intentional in their writing. Classroom activities might include analyzing model texts to explore how syntactic structures may function in specific genres or scaffolded exercises that encourage students to experiment with these structures in their own writing. By focusing on the purpose and context of linguistic features, educators can support students in developing higher level

writing skills while ensuring these choices are meaningful and contextually relevant.

Staples' (forthcoming) book highlights differences in the use of grammatical complexity features among first-year writers from diverse linguistic backgrounds, drawing on data from the Corpus and Repository of Writing (CROW) (Staples & Dilger, 2018). The typological trends revealed in this research could help instructors build on the linguistic assets brought into the writing classroom by students which reflects an asset-oriented approach to teaching where the linguistic and cultural resources of students are leveraged in to enhance learning (Fox & Chang-Bacon, 2023). Staples (forthcoming) reveals differences in the use of grammatical complexity features in academic writing among students from Chinese, Spanish and Arabic-speaking backgrounds.

Chinese-speaking students in the Crow corpus tended to favor premodification in their writing, often using more phrasal features such as attributive adjectives and noun premodifiers. This may reflect their linguistic background's preference for premodification over postmodification of noun phrases, a tendency that becomes apparent when they write in English. In contrast, Spanish-speaking students showed a lower frequency of premodification features in their writing, instead demonstrating a stronger preference for using that-relative clauses, which aligns with the typological tendency of Spanish to use more postmodifying clauses. Arabic-speaking students exhibit similar trends to writers from Spanish L1 backgrounds, as they also mirror a preference for postmodification of noun phrases.

Although these typological trends cannot be generalized for all students that come from these language backgrounds, awareness of these typological trends and an understanding of students' potential writing tendencies could likely help instructors leverage students' linguistic strengths in the writing classroom. Rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach, instructors can possibly identify and build upon students' existing linguistic strengths, design targeted form-focused lessons based on classroom and learner diagnostics and develop differentiated instruction that acknowledges language background differences. These patterns can inform instructional decisions when evaluated alongside careful analysis of individual student writing samples, as each student's language development is unique. For instance, instructors could design lessons that explore the functions and contexts of pre-and postmodification of noun phrases, such as attributive adjectives, noun premodifiers, relative clauses in academic writing. For Spanish and Arabic writers, instructors could design instructional activities that scaffold the use of premodification features, such as rewriting sentences from academic articles to replace postmodifiers (e.g., **the study** that explores climate change") with premodifiers (e.g., "climate change **study**") to help students learn how to embed these structures in academic writing (Lan et al., 2019).

Similarly, for Chinese-speaking students, who typically favor premodification in their writing, activities could focus on scaffolding the use of postmodification, such as wh-relative clauses (e.g., **ASMR**, which stands for Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) and prepositional phrases (e.g., **the findings** from experimental trials) to help them diversify their use of these noun phrase modification structures and also understand how to use these structures in their writing. Lessons might also include interactive exercises where students analyze learner texts to identify examples of premodification and postmodification of noun phrases to understand the nuanced distinctions and functions of these structures in academic writing. Such activities would not merely teach grammatical mechanics, but would also help develop students' metalinguistic awareness, allowing them to understand how different noun phrase modifications contribute to communicative effectiveness in academic writing.

(Cont.)

The development of linguistic complexity plays an important role in enhancing students' academic writing skills. Through understanding the patterns of grammatical complexity across genres and disciplines, along with and their functions, instructors can design tailored pedagogical strategies to address students' writing developmental needs. Staples' (forthcoming) book on first year writing highlights the importance of recognizing the developmental stages of students' writing and the typological trends associated with their language backgrounds. This work, in conjunction with other research on linguistic complexity (Friginal & Weigle, 2014; Gray et al., 2019; Staples & Reppen, 2016) demonstrates that as students advance through their academic careers, their writing evolves to reflect increasing linguistic complexity and this progression is influenced by both language proficiency and specific academic conventions tied to their disciplinary fields and the writing tasks. By tailoring instruction to meet students' proficiency levels, disciplinary contexts, and language backgrounds, writing instructors can help students develop the linguistic complexity and associated rhetorical awareness necessary for engaging in successful academic writing at the college level and beyond.

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Teaching of Pronunciation Interest Group Report: TOP-IG Year in Review 2023-2024

Marsha J. Chan

Teaching of Pronunciation Interest Group Events

This CATESOL interest Group, inaugurated in 2013, is going strong with virtual and in-person meetings to further our knowledge and skills in teaching and learning pronunciation in English. Here is a summary of events we held in the second half of 2023 and the first half of 2024. Each title is hyperlinked to an edited video recording and/or slide presentation, if available.

[Pronunciation Connection Nook](#) (7/28/23). TOP webinars began '23-'24 with a cozy online gathering for teachers of pronunciation, speaking, and listening to connect and network, ask and answer questions about teaching and learning pronunciation, and share tips, tricks, and resources, hosted by Co-coordinators Marsha Chan, Patryk Mrozek, and Randy Rightmire.

[PSLLT: What it Is and How Teachers of Pronunciation Can Benefit](#) (9/29/23). Founder Dr. John Levis informed us about the Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching conference, which gathers world-renowned pronunciation researchers and practitioners to share research and practical applications in the learning and teaching of pronunciation of any world language as an additional language. The PSLLT conference proceedings are an open-source publication for all to access.

At the October 2023 CATESOL State Conference in Alameda, Board-sponsored TOP-IG sessions included **TOP Ideas to Break New Ground in Teaching Pronunciation**, a hybrid meeting with Marsha and Randy on the ground with in-person attendees and Patryk participating remotely. At

the **TOP Business and Networking Meeting** we reviewed our interest group activities and concerns from 2022-2023 and discussed possibilities for the coming year. Other presentations related to speaking, pronunciation, and listening include the following: **Beyond Slip vs. Sleep: Diagnosing Pronunciation Skills Today; Discourse Intonation Breakthrough: Understand and Teach It; Promoting Speaking, Listening, Vocabulary, and Fun with Pronunciation Card Games; Promoting Speaking, Listening, Vocabulary, and Fun with Pronunciation Card Games; Translanguaging with Mandarin-English Bilinguals to Promote Metalinguistic Awareness;** [Chopsticks Aren't Only for Eating: A Sensory Exploration of /n/-/l/](#)**; Teaching Word Stress to Improve L2 Learners' Intelligibility; Breaking New Ground: Giving Accents a Voice in the Classroom; Beyond Pronunciation: Leveraging Structured Poetry to Improve Oral Fluency; How AI Can Personalize ESL Lessons on Any Topic.** To read the abstracts, access the [CATESOL23](#) program. To access handouts provided by the speakers, log into [https://catesol2023.sched.com/](#).

[What Pronunciation Teachers Can Do That ChatGPT Cannot](#) (11/17/23). Dr. Lara Wallace and Dr. Edna Lima, zooming in from Ohio, teamed up to present ways that ChatGPT can save us time and serve as a valuable assistant that helps prepare lesson plans and creates activities tailored to our students' levels about selected topics. They also examined the ways in which only trained human teachers can do in teaching pronunciation that ChatGPT cannot. We are still irreplaceable as teachers.

(Cont.)

[Transforming Pronunciation Teaching: Integrating AI, Agile, and Multimodality](#) (12/8/23). Dr. Di Liu shared SpeakVista.com, a multimodality pronunciation teaching platform that he developed, as a multimodality technological platform integrating speech visualization, automated pronunciation assessment, and AI-driven adaptive feedback.

[Enhancing ELLs' Fluency with NESs' Pausing Insights](#) (1/26/24). Dr. Mark Tanner, Brigham Young U, presented research on the value of pausing in oral discourse and on differences between pausing patterns of native and non-native English speakers. He shared his study of 80 NES speech samples and suggested pedagogical practices ESL/EFL teachers can use to assist English language learners seeking to improve their fluency and intelligibility.

[Pronunciation Journeys: 10-Year L2 Teacher Trajectories](#) (2/23/24). Dr. Michael Burri, Wollongong U., shared his ongoing longitudinal research project about the careers of L2 teachers, with a particular interest in how their teaching practices and thoughts about teaching and learning English pronunciation develop over time. The presentation ended with a discussion about what this means for teachers who help train other teachers, as well as for teachers themselves and researchers.

[Embodied Pronunciation Learning Part 1: Harnessing your Inner Power](#) (4/19/24). Speaking in a new or unfamiliar language requires different movements of the vocal organs. Marsha Chan led an interactive virtual workshop drawing on embodied pronunciation research showing that careful attention to breathing, vocalization, articulatory positions, pulmonic and tactile pressures, pitch and duration, scope and synchrony of body movements, in addition to the systematic use of gestures, enables more effective pronunciation.

At the CATESOL Bay Area Chapter Online Spring Conference 2024, Marsha Chan presented a featured session [Visualizing Speech to Enable Greater Intelligibility](#), a demonstration of how teachers of speech, pronunciation, and listening can leverage digital audio recording applications like Audacity, utilizing the Spectrogram feature to enhance learners' understanding and perception of spoken English. Participants discovered how spectrograms can be a powerful tool for students with a strong visual learning modality.

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Embodied Pronunciation Part 2: Haptic Hacks and Widgets (5/17/24) Following up on the April webinar, Dr. Bill Acton, Trinity Western U, focused on a core set of embodied pronunciation techniques which use both gesture and touch. "Hacks" are used to impact speaking accuracy and fluency, such as "fixing" a phoneme, or intonation, rhythm and stress. "Widgets" can impact the learner's fluency and intelligibility almost immediately by moving a body part, plus touch, to the rhythm of one's voice as one is speaking.

[Using H5P's Speech Recognition for Asynchronous Pronunciation Activities](#) (6/21/24). Portland CC instructors Patryk Mrozek and Kate Carney presented a case study using HTML5 Package (H5P) to create interactive resources and exercises for ESOL students. They described how H5P's speech recognition capabilities were used to assemble a comprehensive tool to help multilingual students improve their ability to produce suprasegmental features of English.

The [TOP-IG Padlet](#) gives you quick access to the purpose of TOP, the TOP Coordinators over the years, the recorded professional development webinars, and the conference presentation slides or recordings.

The TOP Coordinator Team always welcomes comments and suggestions for topics and speakers. If you have not yet done so, log into CATESOL.org and opt into the TOP-IG Message Board to stay connected with TOPs.

Member Update — CATESOL Newsletter Experiencing Healthy[18] Growth; The Editor Team's Planned Behind the Scenes Development

Kara Mac Donald and Amy Sleep

CATESOL NEWSLETTER
SERVING TEACHERS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The CATESOL Newsletter has been publishing quarterly issues on a regular scheduled basis since the Spring of 2020. Over the years, the issues have become more robust with contributions from a variety of CATESOL members, CATESOL leadership, and invited author and guest author submissions.

Amy Sleep joined the newsletter team in September of 2023, and this has not only allowed for a division of the work, but also discussions on how we can improve the logistics of publishing the newsletter. One significant change to the platform that the newsletter is produced in before being converted to a PDF for publication on the CATESOL website. The newsletter has been produced in Microsoft Publisher, which has served the publication's needs well but it is an application not compatible with Macbooks' operating systems and is not supported by web-based word processing platforms, like Google docs.

To move away from one individual's personal computer being a hub for CATESOL Newsletter submissions and final layout version of the newsletter's issue for publication, we are looking into another platform that is web-based and allows for easier free-time collaboration. We are planning for Amy to do a few duplicate article layouts in Canva, or another application, this issue on the back end to work out any glitches, tweaks needed etc. We are still publishing Issue 57-2 using Publisher. However, depending on how the trial goes, we will either fully move to the new platform for the June or September issue. The general CATESOL Blue will remain and the general look and feel of what has been used as a template will remain, but with a slight shift to note the change in platform and the ongoing development of the newsletter.

There will be no change to accessing the newsletter on the CATESOL website.

CATESOL Newsletter Team
Kara Mac Donald, Newsletter Editor
Amy Sleep, Co-Editor
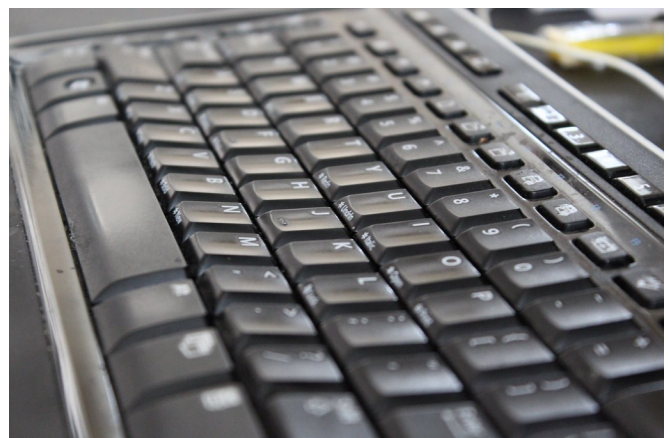
Member Submission I — Empowering Educators: Harnessing Action Research for Effective Language Teaching

Ragaa Shenouda

Action research is a method of educational research frequently used by practitioners to assess and enhance their teaching methods. It builds upon the daily reflection and self-assessment educators typically perform in their classrooms. Since active student engagement makes classrooms dynamic and unpredictable, teachers often engage in brief reflections focused on making immediate adjustments, modifications, or assessments. However, action research is classroom-based research where teachers systematically examine and improve their teaching practices (Chamot et al., 1998). This structured inquiry into specific teaching and learning aspects aims to boost teaching effectiveness and student learning and provides a more intentional, in-depth, and critical approach to reflection, allowing educators to document, analyze, and improve their teaching practices more systematically.

Purpose of Action Research

The primary goal of action research in education is to enhance teaching quality and improve student engagement through a reflective evaluation of teaching practices. Unlike traditional research, which aims to generate theoretical knowledge and understanding of phenomena, action research focuses on solving specific problems or improving practices with actionable solutions (Cohen et al., 2002).

Cohen et al. (2002) describe action research as an innovative approach that integrates practical application with theoretical insight, blending "action and research." What sets action research apart from traditional educational research is its participatory nature, emphasizing active involvement and collaboration among educators and stakeholders. This process seeks to create meaningful knowledge by addressing practical challenges within academic settings. Through reflective practice, educators can gain valuable insights from their experiences, fostering continuous personal and professional growth. Ultimately, action research empowers educators to take the lead in improving their own practices while contributing to the broader field of education.

Procedures for Action Research

Action research is a highly collaborative process rather than a solitary action. It encompasses action, evaluation, and deep reflection, fostering a sense of community among stakeholders (Wang, 2015). This reflective nature promotes a shared understanding among educators, students, and other involved parties, resulting in a better grasp of teaching practices and driving meaningful improvements. While there are several

Figure 1: Lewin's three-stage Model

models of action research, most follow a similar process: planning a change, implementing that change, observing the process and its outcomes, reflecting on the results, and then continuing the cycle of action, observation, and reflection. In this discussion, I will focus on Lewin's three-stage model (Figure 1). Lewin's model outlines three stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection (Cohen et al., 2002). Below, I will examine the steps involved in action research using Lewin's model as a guide.

The first phase, planning, involves "orienting yourself and your collaborators for action" (Burnes, 2020). This stage is crucial for identifying improvement goals and anticipating potential challenges. Researchers must consider various factors, including the specific problems they   (Cont.)

aim to address (Burnes, 2020). For example, they must decide on the actions needed to enhance education within their context. Thus, planning in action research should be forward-looking (Burnes, 2020). By following this guidance, researchers can effectively initiate their action research.

The second phase, action, is about implementing the plan while continuously gathering information to evaluate and monitor the intervention. This serves as a formative evaluation (Burnes, 2020). Built on the initial planning, this phase is especially critical as it represents the practical application of the research. Researchers can utilize various data collection tools, such as questionnaires, diaries, experimental designs, interviews, case studies, and rating scales (Cohen et al., 2002). This flexibility makes action research versatile, incorporating a diverse range of techniques.

The third stage is observation. Researchers need to assess the process, evaluate the effects of their actions, identify any limitations, and address issues that arise (Cohen et al., 2002). Observation is vital, laying the groundwork for the next stage: reflection. The last stage is reflection, which can occur at any point in the action research process (Burnes, 2020). This stage allows researchers to evaluate their experiences, determine whether the outcomes were desirable, and suggest further actions (Wang, 2015). According to Cohen et al. (2002), reflexivity is a core epistemological foundation of action research; through this continuous cycle of action, observation, and reflection, action research evolves, leading to positive change and improvement. Reflection is not just a stage but a powerful tool that can drive significant change and progress.

Advantages of Engaging in Action Research in the Classroom

Action research plays a significant role in these efforts and can potentially enhance the participant's contributions to the education system (Willis, J. W., & Edwards). It promotes collaboration, continuous improvement, and development of critical thinking skills and here I will explain each point in detail as follows:

1. **Improved Teaching Practices:** Teachers reflect on and adapt their instructional methods based on evidence gathered in the classroom, leading to more effective strategies that meet diverse student needs.

2. **Better Student Outcomes:** Focused interventions derived from action research can significantly improve student learning and a more positive educational environment.

3. **Collaboration:** Action research fosters teamwork among educators, students, and the community, building strong relationships and encouraging shared problem-solving.

4. **Critical Thinking Development:** Participants engage in reflective practices that enhance their analytical and problem-solving skills, benefiting students and educators.

Steps to Start Your Action Research

Starting action research helps you systematically improve specific aspects of teaching and learning. By focusing on a particular area, gathering data, and analyzing results, you can make informed changes to enhance your classroom practice. Here are the essential steps to begin your action research journey.

1. **Identify a Problem or Area for Improvement:** Reflect on your teaching practice and classroom environment to pinpoint a specific issue or area you want to improve. This could be related to student engagement, behavior, learning outcomes, or instructional strategies.

2. **Set a Clear Research Question:** Once you have identified a problem, formulate a clear and focused research question. This question should guide your inquiry. For example, "How can I improve student participation during group activities?" or "What strategies can enhance reading comprehension in my class?"

3. **Plan an Intervention:** Develop a strategy or intervention to address the issue. This could be a new teaching method, a different way of organizing activities, or changing classroom routines. Plan how you will implement this change, considering what resources or tools you might need.

4. **Gather Baseline Data:** Before implementing your intervention, collect initial data to understand the current situation. This can be done through observations, student work, surveys, or any other data collection method that fits your context.

5. **Implement the Plan:** Put your intervention into practice in the classroom. During this phase, actively observe how the change impacts your students and teaching practice. Stay flexible and ready to adjust as necessary.

6. **Collect Data During Implementation:** While implementing the intervention, gather data to measure its impact. This can include student feedback, performance metrics, observations, or other assessment forms relevant to your research question.

7. **Reflect and Analyze:** Review the data you have collected after a set period. Reflect on what worked and what did not. Analyze the results to determine if the intervention has positively impacted or needs further changes.

8. **Make Adjustments:** Based on your findings, make any necessary adjustments to your teaching methods or the intervention. Action research is cyclical, so this step often leads back to revising your initial plan and continuing the process.

9. **Share Findings:** Once you have completed your research cycle, share your findings with colleagues or the broader educational community. This could be through discussions, workshops, or written reports. Sharing your insights can contribute to a larger body of knowledge and inspire others to engage in action research.

10. **Repeat the Cycle:** Action research is not a one-time task but an ongoing process. It encourages educators to reflect on their practice continually, identify new areas for improvement, and refine their approach. Each cycle deepens their understanding and enhances their teaching, reinforcing the idea that there is always room for growth and improvement in the field of education.

Conclusion

Action research is a transformative tool that empowers educators to take an active role in improving their teaching practices to enhance student learning. By engaging in a structured process of reflection, inquiry, and action, teachers can address specific classroom challenges, implement effective strategies, and foster a positive learning environment. This cyclical approach encourages ongoing professional growth and collaboration, building a culture of continuous improvement within educational communities. Through action research, educators not only refine their own practices but also contribute valuable insights to the broader field of education, demonstrating that impactful change starts from within the classroom.

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Member Submission II — Understanding Approaches to Language Education

Bushra Wilkins

Introduction

This paper explores the significance of understanding diverse approaches in the context of language education, particularly for adult learners. It discusses various approaches to learning, including surface, deep, strategic, reflective, adaptive, and collaborative learning. The implications for language teachers are examined, emphasizing the need for flexible teaching methods that accommodate different learning needs. Ultimately, the paper advocates for a more personalized approach to language instruction, fostering an inclusive environment where all learners can thrive. Educators need to be flexible and adaptable in their teaching methods to accommodate varying learning preferences and needs. As Kenneth and Rita Dunn stated, "If students cannot learn the way we teach them, then we must teach them the way they learn." This exchange of ideas is intended to create a collaborative atmosphere, reinforcing the importance of adapting teaching strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Background

The concept of diverse learning approaches has garnered significant attention in the field of education. Research indicates that understanding these approaches is essential for enhancing student engagement and academic performance. For instance, according to research by Willingham (2020), tailoring instruction to individual learning preferences can enhance motivation and achievement among students. Similarly, Vermunt and Donche (2017) emphasize that personalized approaches in the classroom significantly benefit students by aligning with their unique ways of processing information. In addition, Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (2015) continues to be influential, positing that effective learning occurs when individuals reflect on their experiences and adjust their learning strategies accordingly. In the context of language education, Bishop and Verleger (2019) highlight the importance of integrating varied teaching methods, which is crucial for language retention and proficiency. This revision incorporates newer research sources and reflects updated insights into educational practices.

Research also supports the efficacy of multiple intelligences as a framework for understanding diverse learning needs. Gardner (2011) identifies various intelligences, such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, and interpersonal, that influence how individuals learn. This framework encourages language teachers to incorporate a broad range of activities and assessments to cater to the diverse needs of their students.

Purpose and Key Points

The purpose of this article is to explore effective strategies for incorporating diverse learning approaches in the classroom. Understanding and responding to different learning preferences can significantly enhance student engagement and outcomes. The key points of this article include:

1. **Adapting Teaching Strategies:** Effective educators adapt their strategies to address students' individual needs. This includes integrating a range of activities, such as case studies, group work, and personalized feedback, to cater to different learning styles.

2. **Practical Application:** Real-world examples of successful adaptations demonstrate that applying a mix of approaches can improve learning outcomes. For instance, case studies have been used effectively in language education to help students process and retain new information.

3. **Continuous Feedback and Improvement:** Encouraging feedback from students and peers allows educators to refine their methods. This ensures that teaching strategies evolve to meet the dynamic needs of learners.

Implications for Language Teachers: Expanding Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is a teaching approach that adjusts strategies, materials, and activities to accommodate the varied learning needs, preferences, and abilities of students. For language teachers, particularly in ESL classrooms, this approach is critical for fostering an inclusive environment where all learners can thrive. Understanding the unique needs of each learner allows teachers to use differentiated techniques that address diverse cognitive abilities, learning strategies, and motivation levels.

Practical Application of Differentiated Instruction in the Language Classroom

1. **Varying Content and Materials**
   To address different levels of background knowledge, teachers can use varied content sources. For example:

   - **Tiered assignments:** Teachers can design tasks with varying difficulty levels for the same topic. For a lesson on vocabulary, some students may focus on simple word recognition, while others work on using the vocabulary in complex sentences.

   - **Multimodal resources:** Offer material in multiple formats (videos, readings, etc.) to cater to diverse preferences.

2. **Adjusting the Process**
   The process of learning can also be modified to suit different needs:

   - **Flexible grouping:** Organize students into rotating groups based on task requirements, ensuring all have the opportunity for peer collaboration and independent study.

   - **Learning stations:** Set up stations around the classroom where students rotate through different activities (e.g., listening practice, vocabulary games, speaking exercises).

3. **Tailoring Output**
   Teachers can offer options for how students demonstrate their learning:

   - **Choice boards:** Give students the opportunity to choose how they present their understanding. After a reading comprehension task, students could write a summary, create a visual representation of the key themes, or present orally to the class.

   - **Targeted feedback:** Personalize feedback according to student performance.

4. **Sample Classroom Activities**
   Here are some examples of activities ESL teachers can use to differentiate instruction:

   - **Vocabulary Learning through Games:** Create vocabulary flashcards for a variety of levels. For lower-level students, include simple words with pictures. Higher-level students can work on using those words in sentences or creating their own definitions. Incorporate games like memory matching or word association.

   - **Role-Playing Conversations:** Divide students into small groups, assigning them different roles to play in a dialogue.

   - **Interactive Listening Activities:** Play a recorded conversation and offer students different tasks. Some may focus on identifying key words, while others work on interpreting nuances or inferring the speaker's tone. Follow up with peer discus-

sions to deepen comprehension.

5. **Assessment Strategies**
Differentiated instruction also extends to assessments. Teachers can:

- **Use formative assessments:** Frequent, low-stakes assessments (like quick comprehension checks or exit tickets) allow teachers to gauge student understanding without the pressure of major exams.

- **Provide flexible assessments:** Offer a mix of oral presentations, written tests, and projects.

What Does This Mean for Teachers?

Differentiated instruction requires teachers to be flexible, creative, and responsive to student needs. It means:

- **Ongoing assessment:** Teachers should continually assess students to understand their evolving needs and adjust instruction accordingly.

- **Collaboration:** Working closely with students to understand their preferences is key. Teachers can gather feedback through surveys or informal check-ins.

- **Continuous Professional Development:** Staying informed about new strategies for differentiation and sharing practices with colleagues are important steps for refining and expanding teaching techniques.

Fostering Inclusivity Through Differentiation

Differentiated instruction not only helps language learners succeed but also fosters a more engaged and motivated classroom. By offering varied approaches in content, process, and assessments, teachers can meet students where they are and guide them to higher levels of achievement. This inclusive approach helps ensure that every student, regardless of their background or ability, has the tools they need to succeed in language learning. Through practical application, educators can create dynamic classrooms that support diverse learning needs, helping students reach their full potential in language acquisition.

In language learning, mismatched teaching and learning approaches can result in students struggling to retain vocabulary, comprehend grammar structures, or engage in speaking activities. To create an inclusive classroom that fosters student success, educators can incorporate a variety of teaching methods such as collaborative tasks, reflective exercises, and adaptive assessments.

1. **Collaborative Tasks**
Example: Group Projects
Teachers can assign group projects that require students to work together to research a topic, create a presentation, or develop a dialogue. This method encourages peer interaction, allowing students to learn from each other while enhancing their communication skills. For instance, a project could involve students working in pairs to create a video presentation on cultural differences, integrating vocabulary and grammar structures relevant to the lesson.

- **Sample Activity:**
Cultural Exchange Fair: Organize a classroom event where students present different cultures. Each group researches a specific culture, prepares a visual display, and practices a short presentation. This promotes collaboration and allows for the use of various language skills in a practical context.

2. **Reflective Exercises**
   Example: Journaling
   Encourage students to maintain reflective journals where they write about their language learning experiences, challenges, and achievements. This practice helps students process their learning, develop metacognitive skills, and articulate their thoughts in the target language.

   - **Sample Activity:**
     Weekly Reflections: At the end of each week, ask students to write a reflection on what they learned, which strategies worked for them, and what they found challenging. Teachers can then provide personalized feedback to guide students in their learning journey.

3. **Adaptive Assessments**
   Example: Formative Assessments
   Instead of relying solely on high-stakes testing, teachers can use formative assessments to gauge student understanding continuously. These assessments can take various forms, including quizzes, peer assessments, or project presentations, allowing teachers to adjust their instruction based on student needs.

   - **Sample Activity:**
     Learning Stations with Exit Tickets: Set up stations focused on different language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing). After rotating through the stations, students fill out exit tickets summarizing what they learned at each station. This provides teachers with immediate feedback on student comprehension and areas needing further attention.

4. **Examples of Diverse Teaching Strategies**

   - **Interactive Learning:** Incorporate role-playing exercises where students practice real life scenarios (e.g., ordering food at a restaurant). This approach helps improve speaking and listening skills while making learning enjoyable.

   - **Multimedia Resources:** Utilize videos, podcasts, and online articles relevant to the curriculum to engage students with different learning preferences. For instance, a lesson on environmental issues can include a documentary followed by a group discussion, promoting critical thinking and vocabulary usage.

By employing a variety of teaching methods—such as collaborative tasks, reflective exercises, and adaptive assessments—teachers can address mismatched teaching and learning approaches in the language classroom. This not only enhances vocabulary retention, grammar comprehension, and speaking engagement but also fosters an inclusive environment where every student can thrive.

Conclusion

Embracing Differentiated Instruction in Language Education

By embracing differentiated instruction, language educators can offer more personalized and effective teaching. Recognizing how students acquire, retain, and retrieve information is crucial for crafting lessons that resonate with each learner. Factors such as students' backgrounds, motivation, proficiency levels, and individual learning needs play significant roles in shaping their educational experiences.

Understanding Key Influences

- **Student Background:** A student's cultural background and previous educational ex-

periences can affect their learning preferences and attitudes toward language acquisition. Understanding these backgrounds allows teachers to create relatable and relevant content, making lessons more engaging.

- **Motivation:** Students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation levels can significantly influence their engagement and persistence in learning. For instance, students who are motivated by personal interests may respond better to activities that incorporate those interests into language learning.

- **Proficiency Level:** Tailoring instruction based on students' proficiency levels is essential. This ensures that all students are challenged appropriately and can build on their existing knowledge. For example, beginners might focus on basic vocabulary, while advanced learners engage in complex discussions or projects.

Practical Applications of Differentiated Instruction: Recognizing Learning Needs

As Kenneth and Rita Dunn remind us, successful education hinges on our ability to teach in ways that align with the learning needs of our students. By applying differentiated instruction effectively, educators can create lessons that accommodate varied learning preferences, ensuring all students, regardless of their preferred approach to learning, can thrive in the classroom.

Strategies for Implementation:

1. **Varied Content and Materials:** Offer diverse resources that cater to different backgrounds and proficiency levels. For example, provide reading materials at varying difficulty levels, ensuring each student can engage with content suited to their understanding.

2. **Flexible Grouping:** Create dynamic groups based on student needs, interests, and proficiency levels. This approach allows for targeted collaboration, where peers can support each other's learning effectively.

3. **Choice in Learning Activities:** Allow students to choose from a range of activities that cater to their interests and learning preferences. For instance, students could select between writing a reflective essay, creating a multimedia presentation, or participating in a group discussion, enabling them to engage with the material in a manner that resonates with them.

4. **Continuous Feedback and Assessment**: Implement ongoing assessments that allow educators to adjust instruction based on student progress and understanding. Using formative assessments like quizzes, peer reviews, and self-assessments helps identify areas where students may need additional support.

Through the thoughtful application of differentiated instruction, educators can foster a learning environment that meets the diverse needs of their students. By addressing individual backgrounds, motivation, and proficiency levels, language teachers can create engaging, inclusive classrooms where all students feel valued and capable of success.

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Member Submission I — Key Strategies for Utilizing ChatGPT in the Foreign Language Classroom

Ragaa Shenouda

The introduction of ChatGPT 3.5 has sparked intense debates and discussions in education, capturing the attention of teachers and educational leaders alike. Unlike previous language models, ChatGPT stands out for its remarkable ability to generate human-like conversations and rapidly process vast amounts of information (Lo, 2023). However, the discourse on ChatGPT goes beyond its applications in content creation and customer service. It also delves into serious concerns about moral issues and the potential risks of using these advanced language models. These concerns are not mere speculation; they address issues such as the spread of misinformation, biases embedded in training data, and the urgent need for robust protective measures to mitigate these risks (Casal & Kessler,2023). Ethical considerations also extend to academic integrity, prompting legitimate worries about the authenticity and honesty of educational efforts, especially when employing ChatGPT to complete assignments or compose essays.

On the other hand, ChatGPT can serve as a beneficial adjunct for language acquisition. It is important to emphasize that this article does not endorse using ChatGPT for dishonest practices or expediting academic tasks. Instead, it aims to explore how ChatGPT can be a valuable tool that enhances students' language learning experiences while upholding the essential principles of integrity and authenticity in education (Casal & Kessler, 2023). Its utility can enable language learners to practice speaking, receive immediate feedback on grammar and vocabulary, and delve into various linguistic subtleties. Engaging with ChatGPT allows learners to refine their oral and written proficiency and comprehension abilities by simulating genuine language scenarios. In addition, when the ChatGPT is integrated with traditional language learning resources such as textbooks, it can offer supplementary opportunities for practice and support through language exchange initiatives and live instruction (Barrot, 2023). This collaborative approach ensures a well-rounded language learning experience without compromising educational values.

Methods for Teachers to Use ChatGPT in Foreign Language Classrooms

There are many ways that generative AI can help teachers. ChatGPT proves to be a valuable tool in expediting this process, offering prompt and insightful assistance. Therefore, educators can develop effective lesson plans aligned with learning objectives to actively engage students and enhance their academic achievements (Barrot, 2023). ChatGPT can be used for conversation practice, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation practice, grammar practice, reading and listening comprehension, and writing practice. Here are some ideas for using ChatGPT, as follows:

1. **Generate Reading Articles**
   Teachers can ask ChatGPT to generate articles on topics at students' reading levels.

2. **Rephrase Existing Reading Articles**
   Teachers can provide ChatGPT with existing reading articles and request a rephrasing tailored to accommodate students' reading levels. This allows teachers to offer the same content to different students, adjusting the language complexity to suit their diverse reading abili-   (Cont.)

ties. This way, teachers can offer the same content but adapt to the reading abilities of second-grade or 12th-grade students.

3. **Question Generation**
Educators can ask ChatGPT to generate questions for different text types, such as books, movies, and articles. Teachers can prompt ChatGPT to create relevant queries by inputting the exact text they want. It is recommended to review the generated questions as they exhibit coherence around 90% of the time, which is a significant improvement compared to earlier this year.

> **You**
> Create content questions for the following passage:
> On Nov. 27, 2021, residents of an impoverished Baghdad suburb awoke to the news that the body of a young man, emptied of its organs, had been found in a vacant landfill. The man's relatives had reported him missing earlier that month. The crime was not the first to occur in the alleys of Sadr City, and it will certainly not be the last.
> Since 2003, human trafficking has spread in Iraq in a variety of ways: exploitation of children, coerced prostitution, and organ harvesting. In response to the increase in trafficking crimes, the Iraqi parliament passed Law No. 28 of 2012. It was against the law to recruit, transport, house, or receive people by force, threat of force, or other means, such as kidnapping, fraud, deception, abuse of power, exchange of money or privileges to an influential person in order to sell and exploit them through prostitution, sexual abuse, forced labor, enslavement, beggary, trading of human organs, medical experiments, or by any other method."

> **ChatGPT**
> Content Questions:
>
> 1. What tragic event occurred on Nov. 27, 2021, in the impoverished Baghdad suburb mentioned in the text?
> 2. How has human trafficking manifested in Iraq since 2003, as outlined in the text?
> 3. What specific actions did the Iraqi parliament take to address the escalating issue of human trafficking, as mentioned in the text?
> 4. According to Law No. 28 of 2012, what activities related to human trafficking are explicitly prohibited in Iraq?
> 5. How does the text suggest that the incident described in Sadr City is not an isolated case, indicating a broader issue?

4. **ChatGPT for Vocabulary Acquisition**
Teachers can use ChatGPT to enhance vocabulary, as it can generate comprehensive vocabulary lists on specific topics. For instance, teachers can input the vocabulary list and instruct ChatGPT to create diverse types of assessments, such as fill-in-the-blank or multiple-choice questions. This approach stands out as the most effective method for expanding students' vocabulary and studying new words in a contextualized manner. Furthermore, it aids students in grasping how these words are employed in sentences or within more extensive passages, providing a more profound understanding of their meanings and usage. To achieve this, one can prompt ChatGPT to integrate the vocabulary words into sentences, paragraphs, reading passages, or even.

> **You**
> Create a list of high-frequency on travel and tourism
>
> **ChatGPT**
> Certainly! Here's a list of high-frequency terms related to travel and tourism:
>
> 1. **Airfare:** The cost of a ticket for air travel.
> 2. **Accommodation:** Places to stay, such as hotels, hostels, or vacation rentals.
> 3. **Itinerary:** A planned route or schedule of activities during a trip.
> 4. **Tourist Attractions:** Popular places or landmarks that attract visitors.
> 5. **Visa:** A permit allowing entry to a foreign country.
> 6. **Passport:** A government-issued document proving identity and citizenship for international travel.
> 7. **Reservation:** Booking in advance, such as hotel reservations or restaurant bookings.
> 8. **Guided Tour:** An organized tour led by a knowledgeable guide.
> 9. **Travel Insurance:** Coverage for unexpected events during a trip.
> 10. **Currency Exchange:** Converting one currency to another.
> 11. **Local Cuisine:** Food and dishes native to a particular region.
> 12. **Sightseeing:** Visiting places of interest or attractions.
> 13. **Transportation:** Modes of travel, including flights, trains, buses, and car rentals.

> **You**
> Create a passage using those vocab
>
> **ChatGPT**
> Planning a trip involves a myriad of high-frequency activities that contribute to the overall travel experience. Securing affordable airfare, booking suitable accommodation, and mapping out a detailed itinerary are crucial initial steps. Obtaining the necessary visa and ensuring your passport is up-to-date are prerequisites for international travel.
>
> Once the basics are covered, making reservations for guided tours to explore tourist attractions becomes essential. Consideration of travel insurance provides peace of mind, protecting against unforeseen events during the journey. Before departure, it's common to exchange currency and familiarize oneself with the local cuisine, anticipating delightful gastronomic experiences.
>
> Upon arrival, the adventure begins with sightseeing at iconic landmarks and indulging in local culture. Transportation choices, whether by plane, train, or rental car, play a pivotal role in navigating the destination. Cruises offer a unique travel experience, allowing exploration of multiple ports in a single trip.

In conclusion, ChatGPT can be a valuable instrument for acquiring language skills when utilized appropriately. Its utility extends to allowing learners to participate in conversational practice, receive immediate evaluations of their grammatical and lexical usage, and explore different language aspects. Additionally, integrating ChatGPT with conventional language learning resources provides supplementary opportunities for practice and assistance. However, it is essential to be

Member Submission III (Cont.)

careful when using ChatGPT for any language task since it is an artificial intelligence model, and answers may only sometimes be correct or appropriate. To significantly improve language proficiency and cultural awareness, students must actively seek opportunities to communicate with native speakers and immerse themselves in authentic language environments.

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CATESOL Conference Attendee Submission — **My First CATESOL Conference, 2024 - Article Preview**

Ingrid Bosetti

Dr. Ingrid Bosetti with Dr. Deborah Healey, 2019-2020 President of the Board of Directors of *TESOL* International Association, during the CATESOL President's Reception at the 2024 CATESOL Conference at Cal State LA.

I'm writing in review of my first CATESOL Conference experience. This review will incorporate three areas that made up my experience: logistics, venue, agenda and conference content.

Not being able to stay overnight on Thursday, I traveled first thing Friday morning from Oakland to Burbank arriving at the conference by 9:00am. I found that same-day travel for northern California participants to be extremely convenient and cost saving, not having to book a Thursday night stay. When I arrived at the venue site which was Cal State Los-Angeles I quickly realized that the conference registration and sessions were spread out amongst multiple buildings on the sprawling campus.

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California participants to be extremely convenient and cost saving, not having to book a Thursday night stay. When I arrived at the venue site which was Cal State Los-Angeles I quickly realized that the conference registration and sessions were spread out amongst multiple buildings on the sprawling campus.

CATESOL does a great job creating an overall conference experience. Specifically, they created an App for all of us to download with the conference agenda, site maps, and all-important break and networking areas. They also provided us all a great deal of flexibility by offering the first day of the conference (Thursday) online. The conference App allowed me to prepare in advance a speaker itinerary that matched my interests while allowing me to move easily among the three building sites. I found the actual classrooms where the speakers presented to be somewhat of a mixed bag as it related to technology integration, audio, and seating density. Overall, the diversity of session content, as well as the speaker competence and presentation skills, were all well done.

Looking back, I realized that the most impactful aspect of a conference like this is the wide range of opportunities to network with peers and colleagues. As this was my first conference experience, I was unsure of what to expect as it related to networking. I was pleasantly surprised that the break areas and especially the evening activities were highly geared toward an informal socializing that personally led me to many new connections.

In summary, I found that my first CATESOL conference experience to be a great one. The site venue was convenient and easy to get to. The course content and speakers were well received and impactful. Most importantly, the networking opportunities were plentiful, and I was able to make many valuable connections. I'd highly recommend this conference to those members and non-members who have not yet been able to attend one.

P**lease look for my full length conference experience report in the March (58-1) 2025 issue.**

Did Your Present at the 2024 CATESOL Conference at Cal State LA?
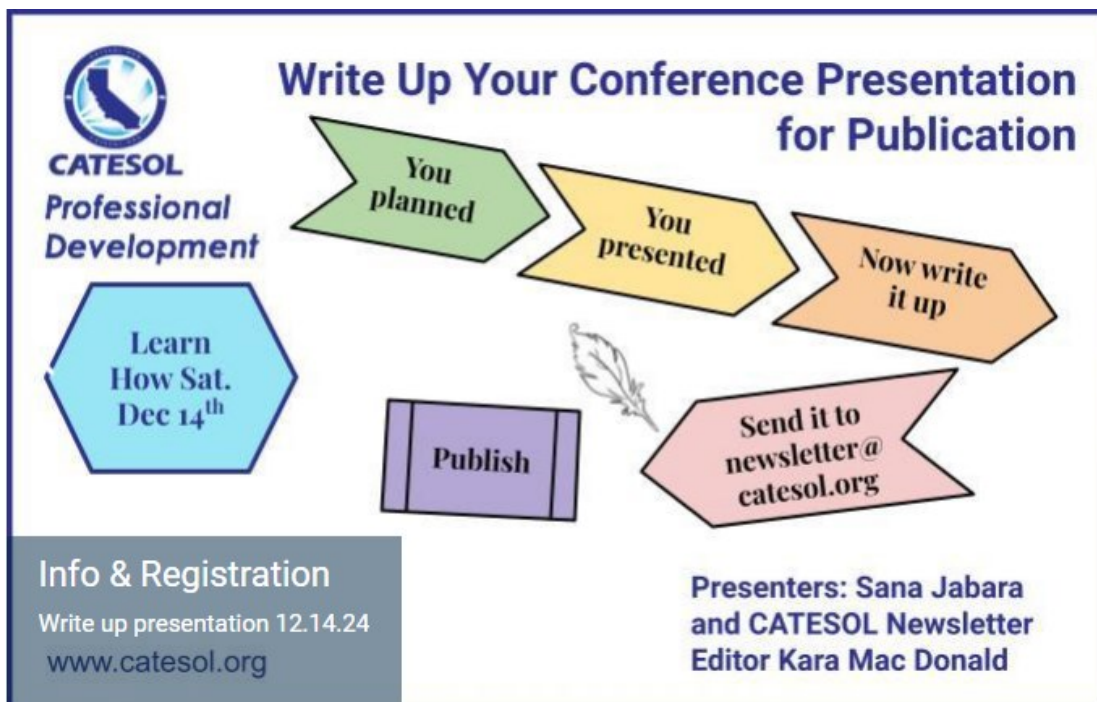
RW-IG Report - Writing Up Your Conference Presentation for the CATESOL Newsletter

Sana Jabara

Consider turning your presentation at the 2024 CATESOL Conference at CAL State LA in November to expand the impact for CATESOL members who didn't attend your session or were unable to attend the conference. The CATESOL Newsletter is an accessible publication for novice and experienced writers that that is based on member contributions as one means CATESOL fosters an active community of practice.

The conference is over, but the sharing and learning from the conference is not done.

It Doesn't Have to Be a Big Endeavor, Short and Simple is Good

As a chair of a department, I have long served as a mentor to support my novice and seasoned language teachers to take risks to development themselves professionally. Some have never done a conference presentation, as they consider it is for someone younger, older, more experience and more. However, I have encouraged and supported my teachers not only to better their instructional practice in the classroom, but to share what they have learned and do in the classroom with others through a presentation in a professional forum. Once they have done that, I like to encourage them to take the same content of the presentation, be it an action research study or a successful activity used in the classroom, and craft a piece for publication for an academic blog, newsletter or journal depending on the content of their presentation and their readiness as writers. And based on the teacher, an article doesn't have to entail hours of writing a lengthy manuscript. Short and simple is good, sometime even better.

Logistics of CATESOL Newsletter Submissions for Publication

The CATESOL Newsletter is an accessible venue for publication. It is a member-oriented publication that is support by members for members. There is not a lengthy review process.

The Newsletter is published four times a year in March, June, September and December. The due date for submissions in the last day of the month prior to publication, but submissions received early are welcome. If you miss the deadline for one issue, still submit it and it will be slated for the next issue. There is no official minimum or maximum word count, as long as the length suits a newsletter length and shares meaning information for readers.

Another Word on Deadlines

There are none. The upcoming March issue (58-1) will be a regular issue that will include conference presentation article submissions, but the issue is not exclusively for conference presentation submissions. So, if you miss the March issue, consider contacting the editor team to share your interest in submitting in a later issue this year.

Missed the Webinar?

No worries. The slides will be available on request. There will be recording available as well. Additionally, the editor team welcomes all inquires about publishing in the newsletter.

Contact: journal@catesol.org

Leveraging Allyship for LGBTQ+ English Language Teachers and Learners

CATESOL Professional Development

LGBTQ+ INTEREST GROUP

January, 1/25   10-11am

Featuring guest speakers Dr. Ethan Trinh and Dr. Kate Mastruserio Reynolds, authors of "Teaching Pride Forward: Building LGBTQ+ Allyship in English Language Teaching".

Cost for non-members: $5

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CATESOL Blog Update — New Book Review Format Available on the CATESOL Blog[33]

Michelle Skowbo and Kara Mac Donald

As of February, the CATESOL Blog Book Review has launched a new format for book reviews under the column title as Book Review Reflections. The newly available book review format strives to make submissions more accessible to more authors who may wish to publish work on texts they may find beneficia. However, they may not yet be familiar with book reviews as a genre or may have not written a book review before and may like a way to get their feet wet in sharing information on a book interest to them.

Existing Practice - Format for Book Reviews

Book Reviews are sole authored or co-authored pieces that summarize each chapter of a text individually, with the book review directly reflecting the structure of the published book. The book review author/s also write an introduction to the overall book chapter summaries, as well as a Conclusion to the overall book review. The length of the book reviews are not regulated. The length is guided by the length of a book and the depth of content addressed, and so the authors make the determination of the length of the review.

Newly Established Practice - Format for Book Review Reflections

Book Review Reflections are sole authored pieces that summarize the text overall, with a summary of the overall book's content. The book review reflection author does not need to specifically write an Introduction and Conclusion to the overall book review reflection. The length of the book review reflections is not regulated. However, based on the nature of the format, we expect the length of these submissions will be between 400-800 words depending on the length and nature of the book's content.

What Books Are Eligible for Book Reviews and Book Reflections on the CATESOL Blog

Academic journals frequently have standing calls for book reviews. These reviews most often than note focus on newly published books, but the CATESOL Blog accepts submission on books regardless of the publication year. We serve a range of members and a longstanding classic texts may be new to a recent TESOL graduate entering the field. Or a long used faithful books by a veteran educator may benefit many members who are not aware of it. So, if you have a book that speaks to you, we invite you to develop a submission to share with your peers.

Examples of two Book Review Reflections, published for February and March contributions can be viewed here.
February: *Book Review Reflection*: English L2 Reading: Getting to the Bottom. By Barbara M. Birch and Sean Fulop
March: *Book Review Reflection*: Working Collaboratively in Second/Foreign Language Learning. Edited By Maria del Pilar Garcia Mayo

Language Teachers as Language Learners – What Ballet Teaches Us as Language Learners and Language Educators

Soondeuk Lowney and Kara Mac Donald

Introduction by Editor

Members that regularly check out the newsletter may recall the newsletter's pilot column on language teachers' experiences as foreign language learners. The article theme is now a regular column theme when submissions come in. The last couple of articles ([Issue](#) 56-1, pp. 16-19; [Issue](#) 55-4, p.18-21] were 'History in Person of EFL Teachers' by Chen Sun and 'Language Clubs as a Core Function in Achieving Proficiency Goals' by Chia-Ning Liu and Li-Yuan Liao. Chen Sun reflects on her paths as a EFL teacher and Chia-Ning Liu and Li-Yuan Liao discuss how the active development of language clubs enhanced their language learning years ago and now their students' language learning. They shared how language clubs support learners' language proficiency, socio-cultural knowledge, and maintenance of motivation. This issue shares a reflection on how the discipline of practice and repetition in dance provides a reminder of practice and risk taking in language learning.

What Ballet Teaches Us as Language Learners and Language Educators

Soondeuk Lowney and Kara Mac Donald

Ballet emphasizes strict adherence to correct form and technique. Each step has a technical element that must be mastered to perform it correctly. Repetition without a doubt is key and fundamental principle in the dance when learning to speak the dance. Of course, this is true for any dance type, but slow, deliberate and precise movements emphasize the focus on attention to form through repetition at the bar, with opportunities for connected practice (i.e. fluency) in centre [of the room]. The authors share how a new interest and their practice in ballet has prompted them to revisit the process of language learning as a form of reflective practice as language educators and language learners.

Ballet's Parallels to Language Learning and Language Education

Rediscovering the Joys of Starting Something New

Soondeuk Lowney

Image 1: Ballet Practice at the barre.

Learning something new is always exhilarating, especially when it's been on my bucket list for a long time. The right moment finally arrived three weeks ago when I took my first step into a ballet studio, standing by the barre with my legs slightly trembling in anticipation of my first pliés and tendus.

This scene felt surprisingly familiar, stirring memories of my first English speaking class in Korea during my senior year of college. Initially, my relationship with English was strained; I struggled through classes that were heavily focused on memorizing vocabulary and grammar, as well as developing receptive skills, to pass college entrance exams. Consequently, my grades in English were low, and my enthusiasm was even lower, leading me to pursue a major in Korean literature and linguistics to avoid English altogether. However, life had other plans. In my senior year, I decided to become a Korean teacher for foreigners, and voilà, English ironically came back into my life—this time, as a crucial tool.

My first English class with an American teacher was unexpectedly joyful. Unlike the rigid school curriculum, this was a choice I had made voluntarily, and I was determined to learn English to effectively communicate with my future students. Despite my initial discomfort and hesitation even in

time I entered the classroom. When my American teacher asked what I did yesterday, I responded with choppy sentences. I wasn't even sure if they made sense or were pronounced correctly, but to my surprise, he understood them. It worked—he understood me. What a joy!

The first ballet class echoed this immersion into a new world. Instead of verbally explaining the movements, our ballet instructor demonstrated them, urging us to follow along. This method of teaching, focusing on visual and kinetic learning rather than verbal instruction, made the class intensely engaging. Time flew by, and by the end of the session, although I couldn't recall all the sequences we learned, the joy of the experience was clearly evident.

In the following lesson, our instructor introduced a new movement that added a manageable challenge, building upon the previous week's lessons. The class struck a perfect balance between difficulty and accessibility, thanks to this progressive approach. It reminded me of the importance of receiving comprehensible input slightly above one's current level of proficiency in language learning (i+1 principle), as it effectively facilitates improvement. Both ballet and language learning start with mastering the basics, requiring a solid foundation that supports the learning of increasingly complex sequences and dialogues. In this way every step in ballet and each word in language serves as a crucial building block, guiding us toward fluency in both dance and conversation.

Our teacher also encouraged us to use mirrors to observe ourselves. Initially, I found this challenging due to my shyness and self-consciousness. In ballet, mirrors are essential, providing dancers with immediate visual feedback. This allows them to see and correct their own errors in real time, much like self-monitoring in language learning. When learning a new language, this might involve a learner speaking and then adjusting their grammar based on the reactions of others or their own assessments. Similarly, in ballet, observing oneself in the mirror and making adjustments is crucial for mastering movements. This process not only highlights the importance of self-assessment and adjustment in learning but also emphasizes the active role learners and dancers must take in their own educational journeys.

Through ballet, I've rediscovered the exhilarating blend of nervousness and excitement that accompanies learning something new. It mirrors my early days of learning English, where every successfully constructed sentence was a step forward. Now, as I continue to attend ballet classes, I am driven by the same desire that propelled my language studies: a desire to express, connect, and understand more deeply.

My pink ballet shoes have arrived, and with each class, my heart beats with excitement. As I continue my pliés and tendus by the barre, I dream of the day I will perform pirouettes at the center of the studio. This journey through ballet and language reminds me that learning is not just about mastering skills—it's about rediscovering the joys of starting something new and the personal growth that comes with it.

The Intermittent L2 Korean Learner

Kara Mac Donald

I studied Korean in a Korean language program for foreigners in Korea upon arrival in the country for a teaching position in a post-graduate TESOL program. I attended two semesters of instruction, along with my teaching responsibilities. I didn't enroll in subsequent courses as I had full-time job responsibilities to attend to, and I had gained the functional skills needed to operate daily independently. My skills across language modalities varied in strength, but I was a basic situational user (i.e., CEFR A1, TESOL L3, ILR L1). I studied here and there when living in Korea in subsequent years at different university and language schools as time permitted. After leaving Korea, (Cont.)

Language Teachers as Language Learners (Cont.)

I have maintained my Korean on and off through various forms of instruction.

Most recently I have consistently maintained my Korean learning, or maintenance, for the last three years through instruction at a language institute and private tutoring. I attended three different lessons each week (i.e., General Korean Language class, Intermediate College Korea Reading class, Hanja [Sino-Korean characters] class). I recently canceled my ongoing two-year enrollment in Intermediate College Korean reading lessons and my Hanja lessons to replace the same time with my General Korean Language class workbook lessons and exercises. Instead of jumping ahead here and there, even though I have been able to understand enough and work with the language, I wasn't developing the productive skills at the same level. I can perform various spoken functions, but I don't possess spoken accurate proficiency, nor in reading or listening comprehension. I just had strategies to live in Korea and /exposed to Korean in learning contexts outside of Korea. Without going back to the basics (i.e. tendu etc. in ballet) again and again and doing what I already know but with the goal is to perfect for form, accuracy and fluency, my investment in language learning and practice will ultimately be ineffective.

From these experiences, I reflect on the role of repetition in drills and meaningful communicative activities for ELLs. I have been an ELT, FLT and teacher trainer professional for over twenty-five years in overseas and U.S. contexts. Focusing on the U.S. and California, I have worked with students in changing learning environments, who confront challenges due to mobility, inconsistent education access due to status and other realities. This can lead to lower school engagement, and an increased risk of dropping out of high school, because students' struggles with English, alongside subject content courses and home and/or community realities. These realities can present additional challenges for ELLs across a range of learner groups (i.e., heritage speakers of English, DACA youth, New Comers, Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFEs), Students with Limited Formal Education (SLIFEs) and many more California ELL student communities). Like me, many of these learners may have the necessary language to operate in their communities but may not have the sound foundation and precision of forms and meanings to incrementally build to the next highest proficiency level and/or their final learning goal. Sometimes a return to the basics and repetition can support building overall proficiency.

Pedagogical Implications for Teachers and Learners

From our experiences in starting to learn ballet, we shared how we connected it to our professional as language learners. Now, we describe individually how a risk tasking environment and the inclusion of practice are akin to language instruction and learning.

Image 2: Ballerina as a Representation of Competency and Fluency

Language Teachers as Language Learners—(Cont.)

Fostering a Risk-taking Environment

Risk-taking is crucial in language learning. It helps students build fluency, actively engage in using the language, and gain independence. But let's face it: taking risks is intimidating, especially when there's a chance of making mistakes in front of peers or teachers. That's why the responsibility shouldn't rest solely on the students. Teachers need to create what I like to call a "safety net"—a supportive environment that allows students to experiment without the fear of failure holding them back. Just like a tightrope walker trusts the net below, students need to trust that their efforts, even when imperfect, will lead to growth.

Students should feel secure enough to try—and even "fall"—without being discouraged. However, just providing emotional support isn't enough—teachers also need to create opportunities for students to step outside their comfort zones. As Slavkov (2023) points out, engaging students in meaningful, authentic language use is key. Activities like role-plays, debates, mock interviews, and collaborative projects allow students to practice the language in dynamic, real-world scenarios. When students use the target language in ways that feel practical and relevant, they not only become motivated but also build the confidence and resilience needed to handle unexpected situations beyond the classroom.

This idea of fostering risk-taking through a safety net resonates with me, as I've experienced it in my ballet classes. As a beginner, every new position or movement feels like a risk. I might wobble, lose my balance, or look clumsy—but I keep trying because my instructor has created a space where mistakes are part of the process. It's not about perfection; it's about progress. This environment reminds me of what language teachers should strive for: classrooms where students feel encouraged to try new words, phrases, and ideas, knowing that errors are steppingstones, not roadblocks. To uphold this sense of safety, teachers should also avoid correcting every error immediately, as it can disrupt the flow of communication and undermine the confidence required for effective risk-taking.

Another way language teachers can encourage risk-taking is by offering choices that allow students to assess their readiness and challenge themselves at their own pace. For example, giving students the option to complete a simpler task or attempt a more challenging one empowers them to take risks that feel within reach. These choices act as an additional layer of the safety net, providing the freedom to explore new skills while feeling supported. I've experienced a similar dynamic in my ballet class. When we practice relevé—a move where you rise onto the balls of your feet—my teacher gives us the option to finish the sequence either flat-footed or on relevé. This approach allows us to take manageable risks, choosing a challenge level that feels just beyond our comfort zone.

Thinking through these experiences, I see how both ballet and language learning benefit from this balance of risk and support. In both cases, the safety net makes all the difference. When students trust that mistakes won't harm their progress, they're more likely to take the leaps that lead to meaningful growth.

Drill Exercises, But Not Soley Rote Memorization

The term drill and practice may be somewhat a taboo instructional approach when we think of the communicative language classroom, where students are frequently set up in cooperative learning activities to meaningfully exchange information to complete a task. Most often these group tasks require students to analyze information and/or solve a problem, utilizing higher order thinking skills. The systematic repetition of examples or practice problems may most often instill images of students' use of lower order thinking skills, as they manipulate language component to practice a form or set of vocabulary, or possibly students participate in a game (i.e., memory game) receiving multiple (Cont.)

opportunities to see or use the target words and/or grammar structures.

However, as teachers we know at some point student repetitive exercise of language forms in perfecting a skill set and to develop overall proficiency. This awareness prompts me to consider the structure of a ballet lesson and a language class. A typical ballet class is structured around two main parts: barre work at the beginning, where dancers perform foundational exercises using the barre for support, and centre work where they move to the middle of the room to practice more complex combinations, turns, and jumps, progressing from slow, controlled movements to faster, more dynamic steps. The work in the centre consists of putting together the individual isolated movement practiced in numerous repetitive sets at the barre. At this stage of the lesson, dancers integrate the isolated movements practiced into a continual expressive dance set.

A language classroom lesson is often structured into the general four stages of preparation, presentation, practice, production, with some lessons including evaluation, and expansion on the topic and/or language use. Although there are different lesson structures and terminology used to describe the sequential stages of the lesson, all are based on the developmental use of language forms and use from controlled practice to contextual communicative use of the language. At the times, learners produce hesitant and stilted language output until there is sufficient repetitive practice in the controlled practice and free production stages, where learners have gained level appropriate proficiency around a particular language function and vocabulary through contextualized use. Yet it is always within the classroom, and so an artificial environment to prepare learners for real-life use. In the same way, ballet class prepares dancers through repetitive controlled practice and contextualized dance sets in a controlled environment, the dance studio, to prepare them for real-life performance on the stage.

In comparing the ballet class with the language classroom, we gain another understanding of why drill and practice and repetition is essential in building any skill, be it ballet or language. Both entails the development of memory of and muscle groups (i.e., minor and major body muscles or facial muscles).

Conclusion

We have shared our experience in learning ballet, connecting it to language instruction and acquisition. In particular, we have highlighted the importance of a risk-taking environment and deliberate practice. The role of an instructor in part is to develop autonomous learners, this entail providing a safe environment with meaningful practice. As language educators, we believe you too likely have many skills learned and being learned and you may benefit from making connections with your learning experiences to the language classroom.

What about taking some time to reflect on how your skills and/or hobbies can inspire and inform your language instruction in the new year?

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Call for Submissions—Language Teachers as Language Learners Column

Share your insights as a language educator and language learner.

Submissions: newsletter@catesol.org

Member Submission II- Tips for Using Technology Effectively

Unsoon Won

Effective technology integration is essential for enhancing instructional quality across all ELT contexts (i.e., K-12, higher education, adult ed, IEP, etc.). Before using a technology tool, we should always ask ourselves (1) what students will gain from using it and (2) how it will enhance their learning. This article outlines seven strategies for assisting teachers to maximize technology's role in facilitating student learning in both physical and virtual environments.

First, it's important to choose tools that are user-friendly and readily accessible to both faculty and students . Additionally, you will want to ensure the technology tools meet district, institute or school licensing tools and use specifications.

Second, orient students to new technology. Before integrating new technology into your classroom, conduct a brief orientation session. This session should explain the technology's purpose and demonstrate how it can be used effectively for learning and homework assignments. Gaining students' buy-in and teaching them to use these tools efficiently is crucial for maximizing their educational benefits.

Third, encourage active learning through technology. Allow students to use technology to engage actively with learning materials. Tools that enable students to annotate, underline key terms, or take notes can enhance their learning experience (see Figure 1). For instance, interactive vocabulary activities, authentic materials, and quizzes can be accessed and manipulated at their own pace, fostering learner autonomy and promoting student-centered instruction.
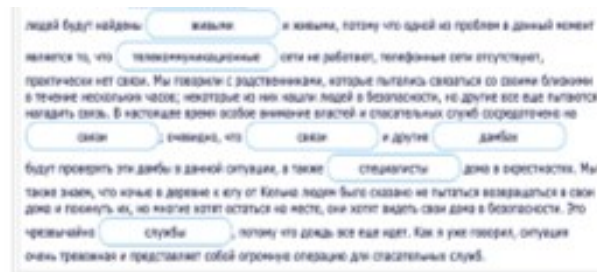

Figure 1: Online App Cloze Quiz

Fourth, facilitate collaborative learning. Select technology tools that support student interaction and collaborative interaction. Tools should enable students to capture discussion points, create digital graphic organizers, or engage in other forms of collaborative work (Figure 2). This interaction not only enriches the learning experience but also enhances teamwork and collective problem-solving skills.
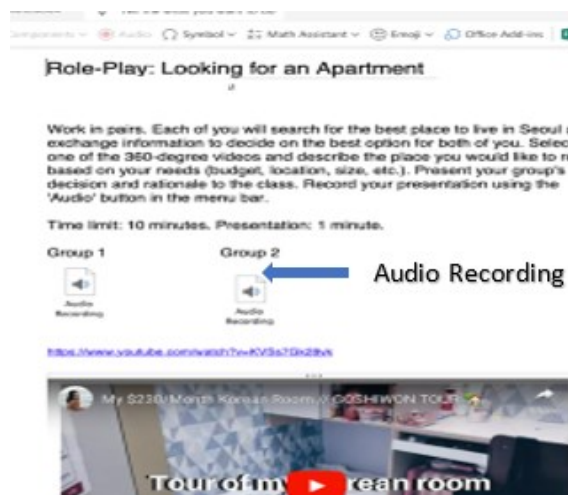

Figure 2. Collaborative student activity

Sixth, limit the umber of technology tools. Avoid overwhelming students by using too many different technology tools in a single class. Excessive tool usage can lead to confusion and distract from learning objectives. Instead, focus on a limited number of tools that serve distinct and essential purposes, ensuring clarity and effective use of technology in the classroom.

Seventh, have a backup plan. Always prepare a backup plan for instances when technology fails or if a particular tool might consume too much class time. This preparation ensures that instruction can continue smoothly and that valuable class time is not wasted due to technical issues.

As technology continues to evolve, including advancements such as Generative AI in foreign language education, it is crucial to remain mindful of the diverse range of technological options available. Choosing the right tools enhances student engagement and learning outcomes. Additionally, sharing effective technology practices with colleagues and students through departmental or school-wide sessions can further support the integration of technology in teaching. By applying these strategies, faculty can effectively leverage technology to support student learning, align with DLIFLC's mission, and improve instructional practices in both physical and virtual learning environments.
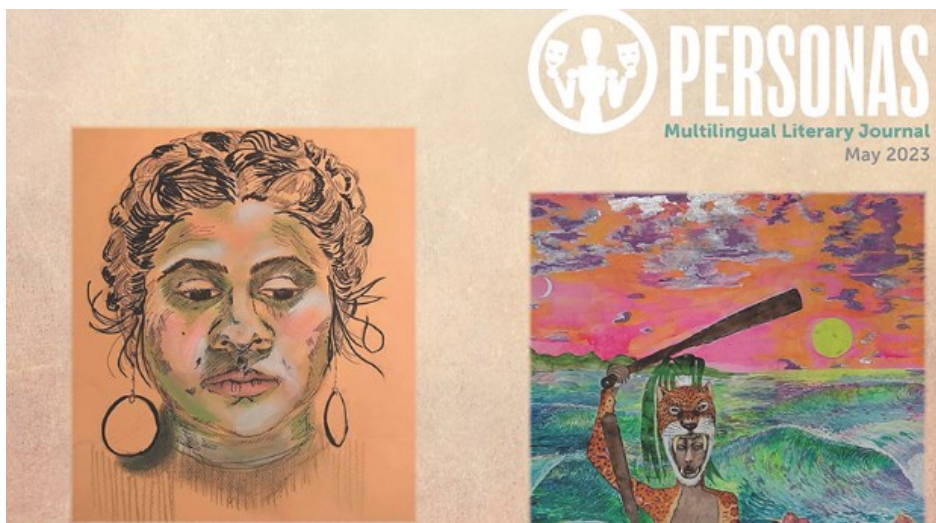
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Non-fiction/essays: One submission per author. No more than 2,000 words.

Poetry: Three poems per author. Each poem no more than two pages in length. Please submit poems in the format you wish them to be published.

Art: Three pieces per artist. All mediums considered. Submit a scan or photo or the original piece.

Please proofread carefully, Personas will not copy edit your work.

All submissions should be sent to jonathan-maiullo@redwoods.edu with the subject line "Personas Submission" and the title of your submission.

Teachers as Language Learners Series—I Saw the Sign: Language Teaching Insights from Taiwan's Cityscapes

Roger Anderson

My recent trip to Taiwan was eye-opening, linguistically. Despite my two semesters of weekly Mandarin study (through the wonderful [Taiwan Center for Mandarin Learning in Columbus](#)), my Mandarin remains low novice.

In Taiwan, I realized just how much learning potential I was losing due to my illiteracy of Mandarin. When abroad, I typically devour public signs, billboards, and bits of writing that adorn a cityscape. In Taiwan, my novice-low Mandarin did not allow me to do so.

By comparison, when I first visited Montreal, my French learning benefited greatly from being exposed to signage in French that was comprehensible to me.

My lack of Mandarin literacy is rooted in Mandarin's entirely different relationship to orality than that of alphabet-based languages.

Orthographic Transparency

Lallier et al. (2014) defined orthographic transparency as "the degree of the regularity of the correspondences between letter units (graphemes) and sound units (phonemes) in a given language (p. 1177). As a common example, Spanish almost always pronounces the letter "t" in a singular way. Yet in English, a language with much less orthographic transparency, the letter "t" is pronounced differently depending upon either the letters surrounding it ("the", "cat", or "thin"), the word's particularity itself (like "t" being omitted in "often", or transformed into a /d/ in "better"), the particular grammatical feature in which it appears (like "I read today" and "I read yesterday"), or common oral reductions (like omitting "t" in pavement in American Colloquial English).

Rather than an alphabet, Mandarin Chinese uses a system of written characters (graphemes). Each grapheme has a unique pronunciation (consonant[/s], vowel[/s], and tone[s]), which must be memorized on an individual basis. And memorizing one character does not facilitate the predictability of the pronunciation of another character, in my understanding. This is what makes the learning of Mandarin Chinese much more difficult to learn.

Comparing resources available to me in Mandarin and French

Traveling to Taiwan, I hoped to immerse myself in a Mandarin-using environment. My interest in Mandarin has centered on orality: reading and writing skills are less essential to my goals of ordering beer and food, making friends, and touring beautiful places. I take responsibility for my weak Mandarin literacy. Teaching full-time and maintaining my L2, while studying two other languages beyond Mandarin, leaves insufficient time for developing my Mandarin literacy.

As a result, wandering Taipei was much less productive linguistically than wandering Montreal. Taipei remains an enchanting, tropical, steamy city with world-class cuisine.

The following examples will illustrate this difference, using images I took during trips to Taiwan and Canada.

Because of my French literacy, I was able as a novice to read letters from signs, to pair the concept of X with the word "Y". To further reinforce this pairing, I was able to transform these written letters into sounds, to then string them in the right order to form words, then to string the   (Cont.)

words in an acceptable order to make an utterance. Once spoken, my utterance was then received and understood by a native French-speaking Canadian interlocutor, who then replied. This created a virtuous cycle of language development. At worst, I encountered an unknown written word (e.g. "accueil" in Image 1), I was able to sound it out, even poorly, into the ear of a polite Canadian.

While I know the (spoken) Mandarin words for "dog" is "gǒu", "cat" is "māo" and "clothes" is "yīfú", I do not know their written forms (in Mandarin, not in pinyin—the latinized version of Mandarin). So, the sign remains illegible to my comprehension.

Image 1. Sign for the tourist office in Montreal

Image 2. Pet apparel expo in Taipei 101, Taiwan's tallest tower and swankiest mall

The same is true when I bought coffee. In Canada, I may not know what Saint Jean is or why it is written on my cup, but I can read it, pronounce it, and inquire.

In spoken Mandarin, "tea" is "chá", but I have not memorized its written form. Thus, Image 4, the menu at a refreshment stand was of no use to me.

Circumventing the menu and Mandarin literacy entirely, I opened the Google Translate app on my phone, typed in "large iced coffee", and, hoping they in fact sold coffee, read aloud (the pinyin) to the cashier. This scored me the coffee, but did nothing for my Mandarin literacy.

Image 3. Tim Horton's cup celebrating Quebec's national holiday, June 24

Image 4. A coffee shop menu (I think?)

Conclusion

Instructors and learners of English, French, Arabic, Spanish, Russian, and all other alphabet-based languages should be aware of the simplicity of alphabet-based literacy and be grateful for the incredible breadth and depth of resources that it avails. Any piece of writing within the target language—beer bottles, bus tickets, bathroom signs, sports teams' insignias, word-ful graffiti—can be used as tools for vocabulary acquisition. Specifically, such realia can help learners multilevel input-processing (Barcroft, 2024), meaning a learner's combining of written, oral, and conceptual forms of a lexical item at the word and sentence levels. This is a serious advantage of alphabet-based languages over non-alphabet-based languages—advantages which pedagogy should appreciate and fully exploit.

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CORPUS-INFORMED PRIORITIES for TEACHING WORD STRESS in English

CATESOL Professional Development

January 24, 2025 12:00-1:00 pm PT

Presenter: Dr. DJ Kaiser, Webster University

Info and Registration
Corpus-informed word stress 01.24.25
Info & Registration: www.catesol.org

Hosted by TOP-IG Coordinators Marsha Chan and Patryk Mrozek #catesoltop

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Activities for the Classroom-The Year in Pictures

Noemí Castelo Veiga and Kara Mac Donald

Introduction by the Editor

The CATESOL Newsletter has offered a variety of ideas for classroom instruction, especially in 2023 when generative AI applications were newly available. As a classroom practitioner newsletter, we thought we would like to continue the focus on sharing classroom activities around any topic and across skills to assist teachers in fostering deeper engagement among students. Whether veteran educator or just starting your career, we hope you gain ideas from this article and future ones, as well encourage you to share your hands-on projects, collaborative exercises and more with CATESOL members.

The Year in Pictures

Time's Year in Pictures is an annual feature published by Time magazine, which highlights the most powerful, defining, and memorable moments of the past year through a curated selection of photographs. The collection often spans a wide range of subjects, including politics, global events, cultural milestones, natural disasters, sports, and human-interest stories.

Each image is selected for its emotional impact, storytelling potential, and ability to encapsulate a moment in history. The collection is not just about showcasing major events but also the human experience—capturing moments of triumph, tragedy, hope, and despair.

It serves as a visual recap, offering readers a chance to reflect on the year through the lens of photography and how we understand history and our collective experience.

Key Features of Time's Year in Pictures are that they have a global scope, emotional resonance, diversity of subjects, and historical context, as well as excellence in photojournalism.

Use in the Classroom

Time's Year in Pictures can serve as an effective authentic material tool in the classroom, offering a unique way to engage language learners with current events, historical analysis, and visual literacy. Since they are images, they can be used with a variety of proficiency levels. The task designed around the pictures will dictate the level of language output needed. Additionally, since they cover a range of issues, an appropriate selection of age-appropriate images can be selected. For example, moments of triumph, hope, and culture maybe address issues better suited for younger learners, while issues of tragedy and despair may be reserved for more mature learners.

Beyond Language Practice; Fostering Critical Thinking & Visual Literacy

Students can be asked to select one or more images from the whole collection or a limited selection chosen by the teacher. They can be asked low order thinking skills like:

- What is the main subject of the photo? Write two questions you want to know about the subject.

- Write a description of what you see in the photo.

- What do you like about the image/s you chose and why?

Another approach to using the photos for lower and mid-level proficiency learners is to ask students to select an image and write a short story or personal narrative inspired by it. They can also consider how the light, composition, layout of foreground and background color contribute (Cont.)

to photo's message and/or impact. These tasks promote creative writing skills, while also helping students understand how visual characteristics tell a story.

To move away from visible content in the photo, and access non-tangible messages and emotions evoked by the photo, students can be asked questions to engage their higher order thinking skills.

For example,

• What emotions or underlying messages does the image convey?

• What historical or cultural context is necessary to understand the image?

Such questions help students to develop their critical thinking skills and interpret images in a more nuanced way, fostering a deeper understanding of media.

Additionally, the images can be used to discuss recent current events, where students select images that represent key global or national stories from the year and prompt students to explore the significance of the event, varying perspectives around the event and/or the larger historical or social trends that are reflected in the image.

Examples from Language Learners

The examples below show the activities and language production of three language learners and their language proficiency levels. CEFR skill level descriptors.

ACTFL	ILR	CEFR
Novice (Low/Mid/High)	0/0+/1	A1
Intermediate (Low/Mid/High)	1+	A2
Advanced Low	2	B1
Advanced Mid	2+	B2
Advanced High	3/3+	C1
Superior	4+	C2
	**	

Image 1. Language Proficiency Scale Equivalencies

English Learner, Postgraduate Student, CEFR B2

Activity: What emotions or underlying messages does the image convey?

Photography is a marvelous art with an extraordinary power to social denounce. Catastrophe, desolation, inoperability, impotence, fear, abandonment, and shame. As a human being in general and as a Spaniard in particular, this picture evokes in the depths of my soul feelings of sadness and disconsolation towards a people, the Valencians, who have suffered first the devastating consequences of the floods of the DANA (a Spanish acronym for high-altitude isolated depression, and unlike common storms or squalls it can form independently of polar or subtropical jet streams) and then the inoperativeness of the Spanish institutions, being mutilated, destroyed and abandoned at the mercy of theft and/or looting and surviving thanks to the particular help of individuals from civil society. At least, this is the feeling that beats strongly in my heart, a heart that, after this catastrophe, is indignant/outraged with the institutionalized solidarity and the mechanisms of the formal Spanish democracy of the 21st century. Regrettably, I believe that this feeling is shared by (Cont.)

thousands, millions, of Valencians who unfortunately have been the protagonists of this story, citizens who lived and suffered in first person the death of their relatives and friends, the destruction of their homes and stores, the fear of looting and robbery, and institutional and governmental neglect. "Politicians used to stab each other, now it seems, at least that is the general feeling, that they stab the people". These harsh words are uttered by writer Santiago Posteguillo, Premio Planeta 2018, in his harrowing account of how he himself lived through the DANA in Paiporta, ground zero of the devastating floods in the province of Valencia. I think it is very enlightening and it makes visible not only a natural disaster, but also a political one.

Image 1. The picture above shows a woman from her balcony observing the catastrophic consequences of the floods that occurred in Valencia, Spain, in October 2024. Photo was taken by Alberto Saiz-AP.

Teacher Insight into Learner's Language Production

The learner above is categorized as a B2 speaker, and speaking as a productive skill is typically more challenging. In her wring proficiency, she demonstrated characteristics of level C1in her response. She controls grammar and lexical choice with accuracy to be effective in producing both formal and informal texts on general social and professional topics. She effectively described the emotions depicted by the image and explained the underlying socio-political issues connected to the event and their implications and defended a position on government actions and/or policy.

Call for Submission to 'Activities for the Classroom' Column

Share your classroom activities with members.

As a community of practice, members benefit from fellow educators.

Format flexible: Article or Lesson Plan format.

Submit HERE

LGBTQ+-IG Column—Negotiating More than an L2 Identity, Advocating to be Seen as Myself

Hyesung Alex Noh

Introduction by Editor

For students to be positioned to learn effectively they need to feel a sense of belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 2017, Gopalan & Brady, 2020), where they can fully be themselves while negotiating their foreign language identity/ies. A recent article (Wicker, 2024) offers practical ways on how to address and include student personal, linguistic and cultural identities along with mental health activity, as a means to foster belonging in the foreign language classroom. However, a LGBTQ+ student voices around their identities have often not been addressed through inclusive classroom instruction and curriculum.

This has been changing with scholars' work on foreign language and gender identity as well as the incorporation of gender and sexuality courses teacher education programs. These developments have broadened educators' awareness LGBTQ+ awareness in foreign language learning to create an inclusive classroom environment that acknowledges and respects diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, while also teaching students how to express these concepts accurately in the target language.

In this article of the LGBTQ+-IG column, a learner of several foreign languages discusses the impact of incorrect terminology for his gender identity in the target language and how he advocated for use of the correct terminology among all his teachers was crucial for inclusive communication and confirmation of his identity in those languages.

Negotiating More than an L2 Identity, Advocating to be Seen as Myself

Historians tell us ancient people's thoughts were largely affected by animist theory, the belief system where everything has soul. Hence many languages have grammatical genders even nowadays when we know rocks and grass are just rocks and grass. That's why students learning foreign languages usually complain about how confusing those genders are, yet they are not the ones who are influenced by that part of linguistic system in the most unpleasant way.

Many trans teens are not treated as who they are in classrooms. In a typical English-speaking class, it wouldn't be more than getting addressed with wrong pronouns when spoken in the third person or being assigned to wrong single gender group. But when it comes to such languages with much more gendered grammar like French or Russian, for a trans student it becomes much more often to face uncomfortable occasions. It is because in English we can say, "You want to be a historian!" to a student regardless of their gender while in French the word historian differs according to whether the student is male or female. This problem can keep the student from fully focusing on the lesson and feeling closer to the instructor.

I didn't need a paper or a book to learn this fact since my own experience made me realize it directly. During my first language session, which was French, I said this one sentence: Je suis nerveux maintenant; I am nervous now. And my generous tutor kindly corrected my grammatical 'error'. Nerveuse he said, changing the male form of nervous into female one. And that did depress me. I considered coming out to him, remembering that France is one of the most trans friendly countries on Earth, but I couldn't. This partially depends on my feminine voice heard by the tutor while also having its roots in the fact I wasn't aware of French words and expressions to discuss gender identity issues.

Member Submission III — Empowering Every Learner: Enhancing Language Skills with MS Word's Transcribe Feature

Hiba Al Ghabra and Mirna Massara

In this article, we will share our experience in enhancing language skills using a Microsoft tool called Word Transcriber. We will discuss some common challenges faced by second language learners, the reasons behind choosing this feature, and present a case study to illustrate how MS Word Transcriber was applied in listening and speaking, activities. The article will also cover the challenges encountered during implementation.

While learning a second language may seem easy, learners often face significant difficulties. For instance, new sounds that do not exist in their native language, such as those in Arabic, Chinese, or German, can be challenging to recognize and produce. Additionally, grammar can present obstacles. In Arabic, for example, students must navigate verb conjugation, which takes into account gender (feminine and masculine) and dual forms, similar to French and Spanish. Vocabulary acquisition is another key hurdle. Second language learners must learn and retain numerous new vocabulary items, including high-frequency words that they need to use and recycle regularly. Failure to recognize letters and vocabulary can significantly affect comprehension, especially during listening tasks. For example, in English students may struggle to differentiate between words like "knight" and "night," or "ate" and "eight." This lack of understanding can lead to anxiety, as students may overthink their speech in an attempt to avoid errors.

Advantages

One of the main advantages of using MS Word Transcriber is its support for speaking practice. Students can use the tool while practicing speaking, then check their production by reviewing the transcribed script. This allows them to identify errors in real time. Furthermore, the transcriber can serve as an effective tool for comprehension checks in listening activities. By transcribing authentic listening passages, students can use the transcripts to verify their understanding of the audio and identify key words and phrases.

Case Study

The case study that will be discussed is about a student who had some challenges learning English as a second language. His challenge was mainly in listening in addition to speaking. Moreover, he also struggled in grammar, spelling, pronunciation, and detecting some topic-related key words in listening practices. In terms of his personal characteristics, the student was reserved, shy, and hesitant to participate.

After the teacher started to notice a decline in his performance in class, the teacher decided to place the student on more one-on-one teaching hours, recommended that he comes before class hour to get extra practice, and provided tailored homework by using the MS Word Transcriber and providing the student with constructive feedback to his homework.

Pre-steps

As you prepare for utilizing MS Word Transcriber in your classroom, you need to set up the tool to match the language your students are learning. First you need to click on "Dictate" tab in MS Word then click on the "Settings" tab. Afterwards, you need select the "Spoken Language", which is English in our case, and also select the language of your computer to English to match (Cont.)

Member Submission III—(Cont.)

the language that the MS Word Transcriber needs to detect. You can refer to the pictures below.
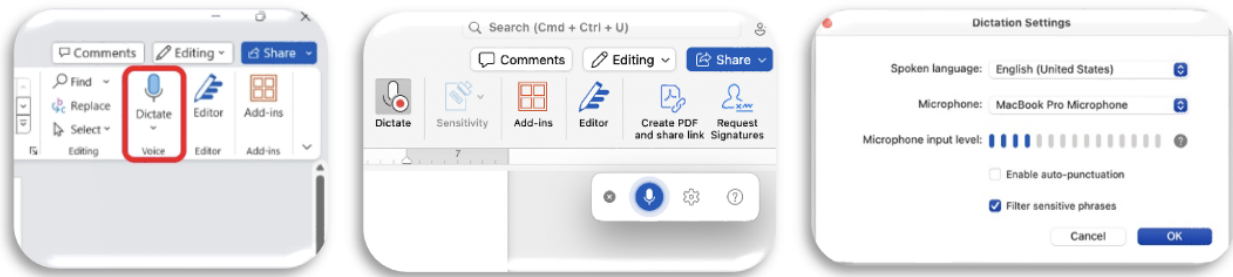
Steps in Using MS Transcriber in "Listening"

How is it done?

The teacher opens MS Word Transcriber before they play the audio for their students. Then teachers play the audio and click on the MS Word Transcriber to start transcribing the audio. After the audio is done playing, the teacher starts discussing general ideas of the listening passage and the comprehension questions. Later on, the teacher shows the script to the students and start analyzing key ideas and key language features with them, especially the points that the students are struggling with.

To better help the students overcome their challenges, such as grammatical point, topic-related vocabulary, spelling, etc., the teacher can develop a color-coded system that can be utilized to highlight certain language features that the students find them challenging and need to pay attention to. You can refer to the picture below for an example on how it can be done during the hour.

Yesterday, it was reported that a horrific accident occurred on the desert road, where a Honda collided with a Ford. Reports indicate that the Honda was traveling at 80 km/h, which is 20 km/h over the speed limit. As a result, the Honda swerved and collided with the Ford. The Ford driver sustained injuries and fractures and was taken to the hospital. The police report showed that the Honda driver was under the influence of drugs.

Simple past
Passive voice
Prepositions
Challenging words

Why in Listening?

This method helps student detect any vocabulary words that are difficult to hear in any listening activity. Having the words transcribed in front of the students' eyes help them see how they are written/spelled and provide excellent exposure of those difficult words for students to get used to how they are spelled out. Furthermore, this method provides great opportunity for students to review certain grammar points, see how particular challenging words are spelled and conjugated.

Steps in Using MS Transcriber in "Speaking"

How is it done?

Member Submission III—(Cont.)

First and foremost, the teacher should explain to the student the process as a whole, why they are being recoded and transcribed, and how this method could benefit them in terms of improving their speaking skills.

The teacher opens MS Word Transcriber before start conversing with the student and choose in the settings the target language that will be used in the conversation. The teacher and student start conversing while MS Words Transcriber is transcribing their speech.

After discussing the students' weaknesses and mistakes they made over the hour, the teacher and student can come up with an action plan to tackle the student's weakness. This action plan can be providing tailored homework to the student, submitting daily written and spoken journal, and targeted grammar activities.

Similar to the listening activity, the teacher can develop a color-coded system that can be utilized to highlight certain language mistakes that the students committed during the hour and they need to pay attention to. You can refer to the picture below for an example on how it can be done during the hour.

- What should I do to maintain good health?
I advise you with exercise daily and eat health food.
- Sometimes I exercise but I get tired quickly and I don't know what healthy food is.
You should played sports with your friend and boy a lot of vegetables and fruits and drinked light tea and coffee before the train.
- Good idea I will try that. Do you have other tips?
Yes, I adviser you on avoid sweets, fat foods and red meat

Teacher speech

Wrong word form/spelling
Wrong verb
Wrong preposition

Why in Speaking?

This method has so many advantages. First, it does not affect the students train of thoughts when they are speaking. Therefore, their speaking fluency is enhanced and their self-confidence in speaking is improved as well. Students can keep track of their progress by saving all their speaking entries and comparing their mistakes to the previous entries and determine which language features they need to work on.

Outcomes

The outcome of utilizing MS Word Transcriber was impressive as the student's performance improved notably in listening comprehension. His spelling and verb conjugation also improved. Additionally, his test grades went from C to A by the end of the course.

Limitations

Despite these benefits, there are some challenges to using the tool. First, not all speakers have the same speaking style. Some speak faster, while others pause frequently. As a result, transcribing authentic listening audio may not always be accurate, requiring teachers to intervene and provide a correct transcript. Additionally, the quality of the audio can affect the accuracy of the transcription

so teachers must review the materials before sharing them with students. These two challenges mainly apply to listening tasks.

In terms of speaking, the transcriber can only transcribe what the students say, automatically highlighting incorrect words without explaining the errors. Therefore, it is highly recommended that second language learners use this tool with the guidance of a teacher, who can provide effective feedback on their speech.

Guest Author Submission — Innovation of Tech-Tools in Classrooms Raises Young Learners' Abilities in Tanzania

Catherine Njau, with students Joan and Mary

In the Tanzanian context, the use of technology in the classroom faces several challenges including the presence of electricity outages, as well as poor techno- infrastructures. However, the use of tech tools in teaching and learning is essential for enhancing collaboration and are effective when learning English language in the classroom.

The collaboration of English language teachers from Kilimanjaro and Kigoma, opened the mind of young learners who were able to innovate their learning using different tech tool, which will increase their skills in using technologies at school. This enabled them to start an IT Girls club at Lyakrimu Secondary school as one of others schools, which will increases the awareness of girls in using technology. Meanwhile our students were able to collaborate with students from Kidegembye in another region and interacted with them through a zoom meeting and learning session about tech tools. This opportunity increased their confidence as one of the students shared, " I feel leaning technology will give me many opportunities in my life."

One of the participants in the club explained how she was started to coding and this has developd her interest in learning. She shared " I started learning computer when I use my father's laptop when I develop the interest of using, and now I plan to be a computer software engineer". For girls and this young generation, this is a dream for many students who have been left behind in technology acquisition, as they didn't get the opportunity to participate due to social challenges and available resources. As a mentor of IT Girls Club, I managed to support these girls to live their dream by assisting them to navigate different tech tools which will help them today and, in their future, supported by increasing access to internet bandwidth. Our students now are the ones who can navigate their learning using technology in their classrooms to collaborate to access students in Kigoma. Lead by Mwanaidi Mwacha and myself, the students have been able to prepare different level appropriate webinars and share these with their fellow students. This increases their motivation and fosters confidence for them to stand in front of their peers with the great conference to deliver their presentations.

While media and technology hold great promise for learning, due to the growth and spread of cheaper and more user-friendly, smartphones, computer technology, and software, the use of the internet by students in Tanzania has increased dramatically (Paschal, et al. (2024).The internet has allowed students to widen their academic performance, and experience, access important academic information and communicate with others within the academic community. Holcomb et al. (2007), argue that the academic attainment by students depends on their capacity to comprehend, read, and communicate at high levels using internet technologies. Currently, there is an increasing body of trustworthy learning and teaching material accessible and available on the internet (Harmon 2007). Despite the many noticeable advantages of the internet in academic achievements for students, little is known about the level of the use of secondary school students in Tanzania particularly in (Cont.)

Guest Author Submission—(Cont.)

Kilimanjaro and Kigoma regions. This can have a negative impact on both students and the school in terms of academic performance. According to Yusuf (2005), the field of secondary education has been affected by internet use and access, which has undoubtedly affected learning, teaching, and research in Nigeria. This could also be the case in Tanzania Kilimanjaro and Kigoma regions. A case study to explore how to make sound judgments when navigating the digital world and hence improve students' academic performance is warranted.

Using tech tools in the classroom can increase students' motivation and help teachers conduct assessment and evaluation at the end of each lesson, develop creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration with the students. Tech tools such as Kahoot, padlets, blogger Vocaroo and Jam boards can be utilized to enhance the development of specific skills in specific ways, as specified by the teacher and the required assessment. Tech tools have the potential to enhance the teaching and learning experience by providing personalized learning automating administrative tasks and improving student's outcomes.

Joan and Mary, the leaders of the IT club, delivered a presentation highlighting how technology can engage learners in the teaching and learning process. They highlighted that using tech tools can help students develop practical skills necessary for making critical decisions and solving complex problems in our rapidly evolving world. Additionally, they emphasized that technology allows teachers to assess each student's understanding at the end of every lesson.

The access to tech tool among students, fostered educator leaders, generate a desire and need to continue researching more useful tech tools applications in the Tanzanian ELT context to be able to continually support an increasing numbers of students who shows the interest of using technology in the classroom. Their dream one day is to bring Tanzania into the world of ubiquitous technology use in the classroom and reduce the gap of those who have failed have suitable access to tech tools in the classroom.

During their session, the participants, who are the mostly teachers and stakeholders, concluded that each teacher should support and guide their students in the use of tech-tools to ensure equity of experience and so that each student will be engaged through a more active learning experience.

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Teacher Trainer Series -#3: Teacher Development through Class Observation: Tips from the Field

Jon Phillips

I think it's safe to say that most teachers, including us old-timers, get nervous when we are being observed. Based on my own experience as a long-time faculty development specialist, discussions with my colleagues and many teachers, let's explore what may be the best ways to observe educators in action so that it helps teachers, our students, and those who are doing the observing.

An observation is an opportunity to provide informed feedback, either as a colleague or an evaluator, and for teachers to find insights and promising practices that can lead to clearer, more focused instruction. This is an essential practice in professional development.

Prevailing Paradigm

Typically, a teacher is observed by someone in the school hierarchy tasked with a role related to quality assurance. The prevailing paradigm is that:

A: By observing the interactions and resources deployed in a lesson, the observer will gain insights regarding students' learning.

B: This will enable them to form a judgement about the teacher's performance against a set of standards and protocols.

C: This can inform a process of generating developmental feedback.

D: The feedback will be acted on by the teacher leading to improved performance and consequently improved student learning.

This approach may work with many teachers. For example, if the observer is working with a newer, beginning level teacher with less experience, this prescriptive observation may help the teacher master a number of discrete teaching skills. This type of observation practice may help in coaching less experienced teachers in a given methodology, help establish the do's and don'ts of classroom practice, and achieve standardization and quality control.

But for more experienced teachers, the feedback generated or given might not be acted on or secure improved learning. There is a very long list of reasons why a teacher might not change their practice in response to feedback. They may not trust it; they may be demotivated by it; they didn't ask for it and resent getting it; they don't articulate their challenges in the terms used by the observer so the feedback doesn't resonate; the issues described don't seem relevant after the moment in which they arose; the feedback If it doesn't address the problems they experience so it doesn't help them; they try to adapt in response to the feedback but it doesn't stick because day-to-day pressures make it hard to break away from default habits; the frequency of engaging in a feedback discussion is so low that momentum is lost; different observers come and go offering different sets of feedback so there's no sustained focus….we could go on and on.

What might make the observation / feedback process work better?

Providing 'Informed Feedback'

Prebrief the observation

To be an informed observer, it's important to know what the teacher is intending to do in the lesson. Meet beforehand (preferably not the same day) and have the teacher explain what and how they are planning to teach. I think it is fine to share ideas and perspectives in the discussion as this should be an opportunity to build a relationship of trust with the teacher, and doesn't address the (Cont.)

and shouldn't be a "gotcha" situation. Another option is to ask the teacher to send you a lesson plan and then respond with any questions or comments.

Most importantly, what is being observed are the teacher's planning habits and how well ideas in planning can be implemented into practice. Critically, though, it is possible to see a good lesson and not realize it without knowing beforehand the larger context of the learning experience. To observe someone's lesson without preknowledge of its design is to assess their teaching against an imagined perception of how you would have taught it. That misses the mark in terms of providing feedback.

You can also use the pre-observation meeting to find out if there are specific things the teacher would like the observer to focus on that they would like feedback on. For example, perhaps the teacher will try out some new techniques for managing a challenging student. This increases their engagement in the process by making it more meaningful to them.

Be engaged during the observation

It's disrespectful to come into someone's class and not be engaged. Don't open your email. Stay off your phone. Engage with the learning. Look for details that confirm students' engagement. Take notes on your observations, with a focus on the facts of what you observe. Immerse your whole self in the lesson so that you can experience it from the inside. If the day's circumstances do not make it possible for you to be engaged in the lesson, apologize and reschedule.

Stay for the full lesson

We've all taught lessons in which if the observer came into the room for the right 15 minutes, they would have thought they were witnessing an exceptionally gifted teaching talent. And on that same day, in the same classroom with the same group of students, if the observer would have come into the room for the wrong 15 minutes, they would be planning their constructive feedback session with a focus on the negative. In order to provide informed feedback, you have to see the entire lesson.

Establish a dialog with the observed teacher

The post-observation debrief meeting should be a conversation between the teacher and the observer. You might begin the feedback conversation by asking them how they felt the lesson went. You can lead by sharing your 'I noticed', or 'I wondered' statements. Allow the teacher to reflect on their lesson by asking key reflective questions about student engagement: when were students engaged? How did you know? What were they doing and saying? What helped them and what didn't? These types of questions draw the teacher into the conversation with a focus on student learning and engagement. By eliciting these types of questions, the teacher can explain the reasoning behind the pedagogical choices they made. The discussion can build on their input, with the potential of a more impactful and effective feedback session.

Leave judgement at the door

I've observed many teachers who don't teach like I would. When I was first responsible for observing and evaluating teachers, I struggled with this. I'd thought I'd been a pretty great teacher, so I thought effective teachers should teach like I had. That changed quickly when I realized there are phenomenal teachers out there who structure their instruction, classrooms, and teaching practices in ways different from how I had. It is important to work hard to go into the observation with a judgement-free approach. Teachers do what makes sense to them, and it is crucial to gain insight into their sense-making process and find out why they make the decisions they do.

Use the time to build trust.

It is not useful to "drop in" into a class unannounced until I am certain a teacher knows and trusts me. When they are new hires, or if I'm just new to them, I give them ample time to prepare before any kind of observation. Why? Because then they know I'm there as a support, not as a punitive evaluator. I have no desire to bring a teacher down, so why would I act like I do?

End Thoughts

Observations don't have to be painful. In fact, if you are providing 'informed feedback', teachers should hopefully welcome observations. Teaching is a practice that should be thoughtfully developed, and observations are part of any good professional-development cycle. An effective observation-feedback process is all about knowing your teachers, motivating them, engaging in a cycle of professional dialogue, and generating self-reflection. Some people only need to be asked 'how do you think it went?' and they have ample capacity to generate their own improvement agenda with a bit of encouragement and guidance. For others, that doesn't happen; some people really do need external feedback. It's important to get to know how to pitch the feedback appropriately depending on the individual. Some people hear criticism and get defensive even though you think you're being very positive, merely offering gentle prodding to tweak in a certain area. Some people are very thick-skinned and, even though you think you are highlighting some quite serious concerns, your attempt to create balance by offering some positive praise mutes the concerns down to zero. This is the problem with utilizing the 'sandwich approach' in giving feedback: offering praise, then concerns, and ending with praise. The teacher may leave the session thinking everything was great. It is crucial to establish a dialog with the teacher, ask questions, discuss the specifics of what worked well in the lesson, any concerns, and an actionable plan of what to do next, leading up to the next observation.

Some sources related to conducting Observation/Feedback

1)	Bailey, Kathleen M. 2006. Language Teacher Supervision: A Case-Based Approach. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

2)	Freeman, Donald. 1989a. "Teacher training, development, and decision-making: A model of teaching and related strategies for teacher education." TESOL Quarterly, 23, (1), 27-45.

3)	Freeman, Donald. 1982. Observing teachers: Three approaches to in-service training and development. TESOL Quarterly, 16(1), 21-28.

4)	Freeman, Donald. 1990. Intervening in practice teaching. In Jack C. Richards and David Nunan (eds.), Second Language teacher development. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 103-117.

5)	Wajnryb, Ruth. 1995a. Teacher's perception of mitigation in supervisory discourse: A report of a pilot study. South Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 23(1), 71-82.

6)	Wajnryb, Ruth. 1994b. Pragmatics and supervisory discourse: Matching method and purpose. Prospect, A Journal of Australian TESOL, 9(1), 29-38.

7)	Acheson, Keith A. and Meredith Damien Gall. 1997. Techniques in the clinical supervision of teachers: Pre-service and in-service applications 94th ed.). New York: Longman.

8)	Richards, Jack C., and Nunan, David, eds. Second Language Teacher Education. Cambridge University Press, 1990. Print.

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CATESOL Web Manager Communication—Member Profile Update

Marsha Chan

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On the left, in the section **Member Dashboard**, under **Member Information**, click **Change Contact/Profile Info**.
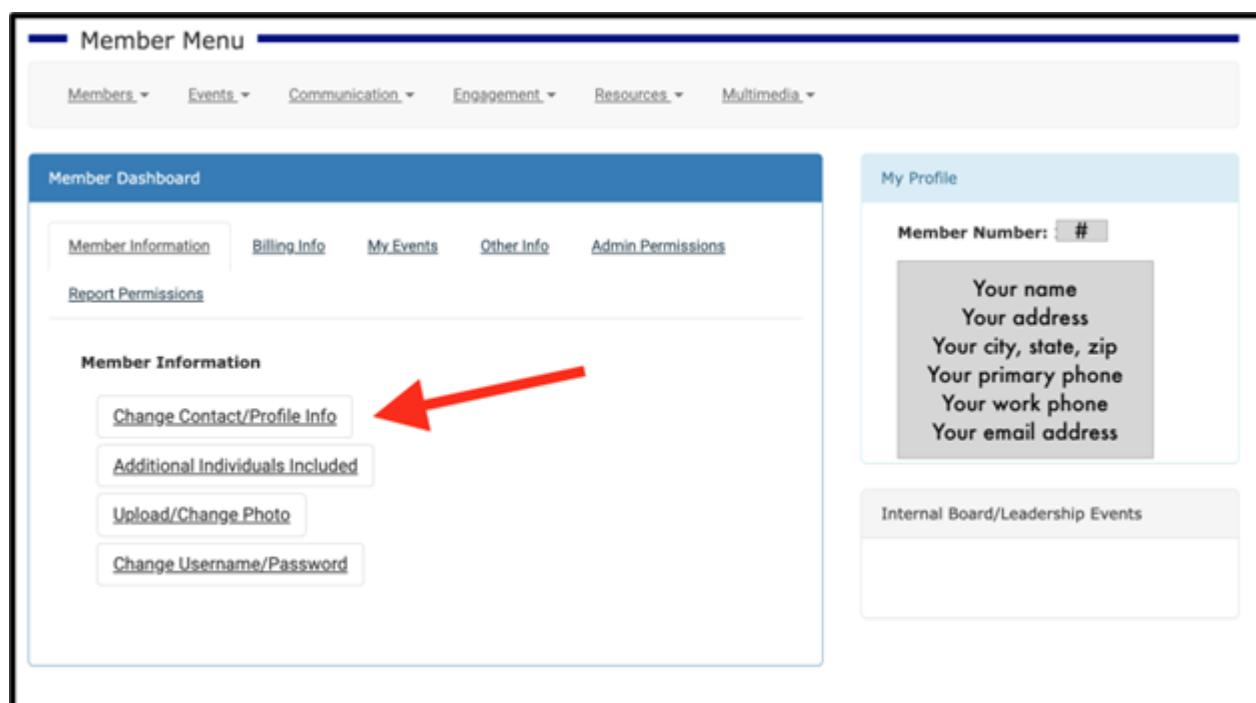
1. Please complete or update your personal and contact information.
2. Indicate your professional position(s) and key in your school or affiliation.

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Selecting a group in any of the three categories–Levels, Interest Groups, and Chapters–will auto-matically connect you to peers in the identically named **Message Board**, a feature of the associated project/committee (the term used by Memberleap, our association management software). (Cont.)

CATESOL Web Manager Communication—Cont.

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"In our new and improved set-up, you no longer need to access a message board in this way in order to opt into a group."
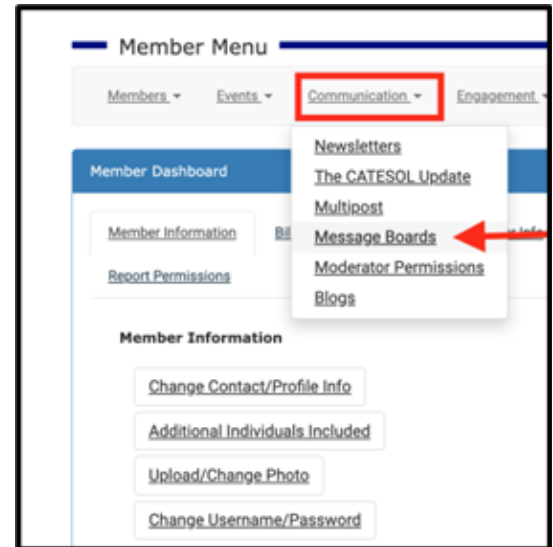
CATESOL Webinar Events—A Lot is Going On

The CATESOL calendar has been packed with recent events in November and December.

Write up an Chapter or Interest Group Report for the March Issue of the CATESOL Newsletter. Let you members know what you are doing and attract more members.

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Write up a short brief for an upcoming Chapter or Interest Group event to advertise events you have planned in 2024. Let you members know what you have planned so they can mark it on their calendar and attract more members.

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CATESOL Blog—Call for Submissions

The CATESOL Blog is published monthly and accepts a range of article types for publication.

- Did you recently attend a CATESOL event or webinar and wish to share a reflective piece of what you got out of the event? Write an article about it.

- Would you like to co-author a book review with the Blog's book review column editor to get acquainted with writing one? Contact the blog editors to get connected to do so.

- Are you a chapter or interest group coordinator and have an event coming up that you would like membership to know about ahead of time in more detail to attract attendance? Write up a pre-event summary.

- Have you attended a TESOL event that you would like to share the information with members? Write a post-event about your take-aways.

- Have an innovative lesson activity or practice you can share to assist members? Write a short practitioner piece.

- If you have something to share, or if you have someone you would like to recommend to contribute, feel free to email the editors **Michelle Skowbo** at meskowbo@gmail.com

Have you read the CATESOL Blog recently?

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