

CATESOL NEWSLETTER

SERVING TEACHERS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE



Better Late than Never

BY CHRISTIE SOSA, NEWSLETTER EDITOR

I hope that each and every one of you have had a smooth start to the semester. Like many of you, this semester is my first semester teaching an asynchronous online course. While I have taught plenty of hybrid courses, each of them had an in-person component—a component I sincerely miss these days.

I miss the chatter, the smell of whiteboard markers (really!), the sounds of backpacks unzipping, and more than all these things—interacting with my students. Seeing their faces. Hearing them laugh.

But, life as we know it has changed, so finding new and meaningful ways to connect and interact with students online is a top priority of mine as it is for many others. I hope you find the pieces in this issue help you connect with your students as you begin online instruction this fall.

Sincerely,

Christie Sosa

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In Memory of Denise Mahon (1947-2020)

BY RITA WONG

EDITOR, CATESOL NEWS EDITOR (1980-1985) AND PRESIDENT (1986-187)



Denise Mahon, CATESOL News editor from 1986 to 2001, passed away on May 16, 2020. To her work as newsletter editor, and to CATESOL's publications as a whole, Denise brought her experience teaching reading and composition throughout the Bay Area and abroad, after complet-

ing her Master's degree in TESOL at San Francisco State University, where she taught both at the American Language Institute and in the English Department at the university.

Following are memories from some of her CATESOL colleagues and friends.

Early on in the history of CATESOL, I was drafted by Sadae Iwataki to take over as the organization's newsletter editor. Having naively agreed to do the job, I quickly learned how labor intensive it was to produce a newsletter: copy had to be written, then typeset, laid out, and printed. A digital newsletter would be decades in the future. Fortunately, my San Francisco State colleague and friend, Denise, came to my aid. Not only did she provide much needed writing, editing and proofreading support, she eventually took over as editor when I became president. Working with Denise made hard work enjoyable. Denise served as editor for five years (1986-2001) and gradually became involved with the entire publications program, applying her skills to *The CATESOL Journal* (on the editorial staff for eight years: 1988-1996) and serving as a member of CATESOL's Publications Committee. I don't think our publications program would have survived without her. Denise is among the unsung heroes of our organization. Thank you for your years of dedication to CATESOL.

My association with Denise Mahon began in the 1980s when she was a member of the ESL program at UC Berkeley, then called Subject A for Non-native Speakers of English, which I coordinated. Denise was one of the most professional and effective teachers we had ever had in the SANSE program, in large part because she had training and experience in teaching both native and non-native speakers of English. This background made her an ideal instructor for our most advanced composition course. Her writing exercises were all based on the students' own writing. When she became editor of the CATESOL News in 1986, she continually worked to bring current issues in the field to the members of the organization, which at one point numbered 3,000. She devoted one issue, for example, almost entirely to the education of undocumented students. She was also an excellent editor. I remember how much the changes she made in a couple of book reviews I submitted improved them.

JUNE R. MCKAY

COORDINATOR OF SUBJECT A FOR NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH (1966-1990) AND PRESIDENT (1985-1986)

From 1994-2002, I was active in helping to produce CATESOL's refereed publication, The CATESOL Journal – first as a member of the editorial advisory board and then as co-editor (first with Peter Master and later with Robby Ching). It was in these capacities that I interacted with Denise, who chaired TESOL's publication services, edited the CATESOL News, and performed numerous essential duties for all of CATESOL's publications such as typesetting, copy editing, proofreading, keyboarding, and the like. Denise truly was the power behind-the-scenes making sure that each volume was ready for publication and that there were no mistakes in formatting, referencing, layout, or the like. She was also a warm, empathetic human being to whom I could always turn when difficult journal issues arose and I needed an experienced publication veteran to turn to for advice.

DONNA BRINTON

EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT AND CO-EDITOR OF CATESOL JOURNAL (1994-2002)

In Memory of Denise Mahon continued...

Denise Mahon was the very capable editor of the CATESOL News during the publication of my regular column "English for Specific Purposes" from 1986-1988, with occasional columns continuing until 1995 (these were subsequently published by the U.S. State Department in 2000 as Responses to ESP, and is available for free as a PDF online at Research Gate) and Chair of the Publications Committee during most of my tenure as Co-Editor (first with Denise Murray and then Donna Brinton) of The CATESOL Journal. Denise was always cheerful and calmly upbeat as she guided the CATESOL publications with a sure hand, making them handsome and respected mouthpieces for California ESOL teachers.

PETER MASTER
PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND
CO-EDITOR, CATESOL JOURNAL (1993-1997)

When we met, Denise was my mentor, literally. I apprenticed at the American Language Institute at SFSU as I was working toward my MA in TESOL, and she was assigned to guide me in developing my teaching skills. With a quiet but firm voice and demeanor, Denise didn't just "tell" but "showed" me how effective teachers can interact with students to encourage learning. From that somewhat lopsided start to our friendship, we grew to appreciate far more about each other in addition to how to construct an effective lesson plan. During her stewardship of The CATESOL Journal, for example, I assisted by proofreading her carefully edited copy of soon-to-be published manuscripts. On a more personal level, I continue to value her invitation to share her passion for Asian art. She had a deep love of Asian art, no doubt nurtured during her travels to Asia when she was a flight attendant and again when she spent a Fulbright year in Shanghai. So it was always a pleasure (and instructive) when we visited the Asian Art Museum for special exhibits. She is missed.

ANNE KATZ
CATESOL SECRETARY (1989-1991)

Are You Remotely Concerned With Teaching Pronunciation?

BY MARSHA CHAN AND JAYDENE ELVIN

CATESOL TEACHING OF PRONUNCIATION INTEREST GROUP CO-COORDINATORS

“
Are you remotely concerned about teaching pronunciation to English learners?
”

Join our free event July 10, 2020 11:00 am California time

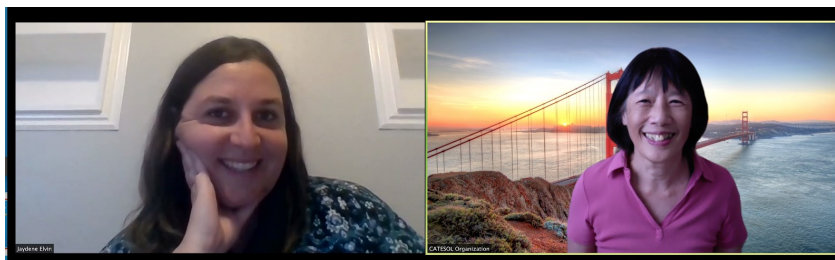
CATESOL Teaching of Pronunciation Co-coordinators Marsha Chan and Jaydene Elvin



CATESOL

Are You Remotely Concerned With Teaching Pronunciation? continued...

Our first Teaching of Pronunciation Interest Group (TOP-IG) event for the Summer 2020 PD Series brought in 54 participants from CATESOL and around the world. We loved being able to meet TESL practitioners and hear about their experiences as we have all had to transition to online teaching during these uncertain times. This first Zoom session was never intended to be an instructional session, but rather an informal “Bring Your Own Beverage” gathering that would allow all of us in TOP-IG to meet and greet fellow teachers of pronunciation and to all learn about the issues that we are currently facing as we are turning to remote learning. In this session, we specifically wanted to learn instructors’ areas of concern, so that we can design future workshops tailored specifically to these needs. Below, we are providing a brief summary of some of the points that were discussed during our “meet and greet” as well as some of the ideas and suggestions that have worked in some classes thus far!



We began this session with an activity that can be done both in a face-to-face class and in an online video class as a check-in for students, and even teachers like us. Conducting this activity at the beginning of the class is ideal, as it allows you as a teacher to check in and see how your students are feeling that day; it gives you an idea of what kind of energy they are bringing to the class. The

mindfulness activity also gives you a chance to check in with yourself and see how you are feeling and to be able to acknowledge your current emotional state in order to be able to put it aside and direct your focus toward learning. We’ve included some brief instructions that explain how to run this activity.

Student Check-In – Facial Expressions

1. Explain to students that we are going to be doing an activity where we will make shapes with our bodies and/or facial expressions that reflect how we feel about certain statements.

A. If this activity is run online in Zoom, have everyone turn their video on and select “gallery view”.

B. If this activity is run face-to-face, depending on the number of students, you can have students stand in a circle, small groups or in rows (for large groups).

2. Instruct students to make a shape with their body and/or a facial expression that reflects how they are feeling right in that moment. You can provide as much or as little direction as needed. Encourage your students to exaggerate their expressions as much as possible (e.g., energy level 3 vs. energy level 8).

3. Tell the students you will count to three (or five for beginners), giving them time to formulate their expression and/or shape. Count the students in, and tell them to freeze in position. After you’ve had a look around at the different shapes/expressions, you can select individuals or groups to unfreeze and explain what they see in those around them.

4. You can choose to have them repeat this activity with as many statements or questions as you feel necessary. In our TOP session, we made facial expressions for the following:

A. How are you feeling today?

B. How did you feel when you learned you had to transition to online teaching?

C. How do you feel about the upcoming Fall Semester?

5. After doing the activity and having students share the different shapes/expressions they see, you may choose to have a little debrief about the shared feelings among the students.

Are You Remotely Concerned With Teaching Pronunciation? continued...

...have a little debrief about the shared feelings among the students.

Concerns about teaching pronunciation

After our participant check-in, we then transitioned into a discussion about some of the questions and concerns regarding teaching pronunciation in general and in a remote learning environment. Participants were randomly assigned to breakout rooms, where they had the opportunity to discuss with each other their responses to four questions. These discussion topics ranged from what went well for teaching online this past semester, what didn't work well, what teachers want to know or learn how to do better, as well as topics they would like to see in future TOP sessions. Below is a summary of the participants' responses.

What did you do that worked for online pronunciation teaching?

Students were less shy speaking and participating over video sessions/discussion than they would have in a live class.

- For classes using video, teachers found that everyone was able to clearly see the instructor; there were more close ups, rather than viewing the teacher from the back of the room. The close-ups of the teacher were really good for demonstrating articulation. Online video use (e.g., Zoom) also enabled everyone to see each other's faces (not just the teacher's) really well.
- Some teachers found that using a "mouth model," which can be purchased online, allowed for more engaging lessons.
- Breakout rooms in Zoom were quite fun – some had small groups work on things such as tongue twisters. Zoom was also used to practice pronunciation and for office hours.
- Some teachers found the use of [Flipgrid](#) and [Edpuzzle](#) (which has the ability to leave audio feedback) really useful.
- Some teachers were able to apply a flipped class approach where workbook exercises were completed at home and in class (Zoom) sessions focused on mini lesson presentations, poetry recitations, etc.
- Small class sizes were optimal, and students had the potential to request captioning from Zoom (which was good for the lower level students).
- Some teachers made use of phonetic transcriptions to help students make the sounds that they wanted to learn.
- YouTube channels could be used in classes (e.g., Keenan Rhodes)
- Some teachers made use of the color vowel chart (e.g., Blue Canoe)
- Word lists and/or paragraphs could be recorded using the recorder on Vocaroo, Zoom, Canvas, or a phone.

What did you do that did NOT work so well?

- Differing levels of student comfort with using technology, making videos, accessing course management. On the teacher's side, some found individual feedback to be really time-consuming.
- Students' refusal to turn on their cameras, which makes it really difficult to teach pronunciation (e.g., tongue twisters).
- Difficulties in classroom management – challenges controlling large groups of students, making sure they don't all speak at once, etc.
- Difficulties with access: e.g., students who can only attend via cell phone, internet connection issues.
- Difficulties with teaching some pronunciation exercises online.
- Difficulties with playing games like Kahoot.
- Maintaining student engagement in an open class vs. Zoom breakout rooms.

Are You Remotely Concerned With Teaching Pronunciation? continued...

What do you want to know or be able to do better?

- Low level tech activities and/or tools
- YouTube video resources, websites with resources for low-level students
- Resources to use and share with our students
- Technology for student collaboration, but also for asynchronous classes
- Specific pronunciation tools
- How to deal with students not wanting to use their video
- How to provide individual feedback in a time efficient manner
- How to teach large classes online
- How to better assess students, to evaluate their pronunciation progress, and create opportunities for student autonomy
- How to create activities where students record themselves
- How to teach students to be able to use the technology
- How to structure a course without texts
- How to teach skills such as intonation, linking, blending, etc.

Suggest topics for CATESOL TOP-IG to provide

- The use of props and drama for pronunciation teaching
- Technology for teachers of pronunciation – specifically tools for pronunciation teaching and concrete activities to accompany these tools
- Low-tech online teaching
- Hands-on activities
- Most effective practices for teaching pronunciation

Participants were reminded that CATESOL has resources available at <https://www.catesol.org/> Resources > Online Training. Currently, over 30 video recorded workshops and training sessions are available for members to view, and some of them speak directly to questions and topics that came up in our live session July 10.

An edited version of the recording of the session is available here: [Are you remotely concerned with teaching pronunciation?](#) Please note: Zoom recordings don't show the poll questions and poll results, nor do they follow the breakout discussions.

Future TOP Events

Would you like to get the latest communication and notifications from the CATESOL Teaching of Pronunciation Interest Group? If you are not yet a member of TOP-IG, log into CATESOL at www.catesol.org, and once inside memberleap, under Communication, choose Message Boards, where you can opt into TOP-IG. This video tutorial can help guide you: [CATESOL Memberleap Introduction](#). If you are not yet a member of CATESOL, click Join on the [home page](#).

Establishing Online Routines

BY CHRISTIE SOSA, CATESOL NEWS EDITOR

What is your online weekly routine? Discussion posts due Wednesday? Papers due Friday? Many of us have established in-person routines that do not easily transfer to an online setting. And while there have been plenty of resources on delivering instruction online, I have come across few resources on online schedules. In an effort to establish my own online routine for my asynchronous, writing course, I decided to do some reading on the topic.

First, why are routines and rhythms for an online class valuable?

Weekly rhythms can help set expectations for students regarding how much time they should commit to an assignment, how often they should login, how frequently they should be interacting with their peers, or event when they should expect responses/feedback from you, their instructor.

The Online Teaching Survival Guide (2016) by Judith Boettcher and Rita-Marie Conrad

The online environment offers some useful structuring opportunities to assist students and academics with their management of time. Planning the timing of activities and events is at the core of any design of learning and teaching processes.

Online Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (2007) by Shirley Bach, Philip Hayes, and Jennifer Smith

Second, what is a week?

In an online class, *time* takes on a whole new meaning! When does your week begin? When does it end? When does instruction take place? When is new content released? What are the deadlines for assignments?

Instead of just 2-3 days of class time, now you

have all 7 weekdays to work with. Think through when you want to release content and when instruction will take place as this will determine when you plan for class and grade assignments.

Third, so what course components do I include in a week?

Some key items you should include in a week according to the Online Learning Consortium and research conducted at Oregon State University include:

Weekly Announcement: Every week should include a weekly announcement that comes in the form of an email or video in which introduces students to the week, key assignments, and any other pertinent information.

Instruction: Whether synchronous or asynchronous, instruction should be delivered.

Discussions: Providing an opportunity for your students to connect and “converse” with one another is key!

Assignments: Students should submit some type of assignment that encourages them to content with the content they’ve learned.

Assessment: Most importantly, students should be assessed. Whether formally through a quiz or informally through a reflection, regular assessment is key to ensure students are meeting learning outcomes.

Need more online schedule ideas? [See Judith Boettcher and Rita-Marie Conrad’s sample schedule and download a fillable template to fill out!](#)