

CATESOL NEWSLETTER

SERVING TEACHERS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE



Letter from the CATESOL President

I hope that you are all having a great spring semester. The pandemic has already been going on for a year. I never would have thought that we would be in this situation. Fortunately, we have once again been able to postpone our state conference until 2022. More on that later. This spring we have a few events to look forward to. The Spring Virtual conference will take place May 7-8 using the same conference platform we used last fall. Registration opens on March 10. You can get more information [here](#). Be sure to check [our website](#) often as there are many smaller events for you to attend in March and April.



I want to take this time to introduce some new board members. Christie Sosa has stepped down after 2 years of monthly newsletters and blog posts. She is replaced by Kara MacDonald who has a lot of expertise in publications. The newsletter will now be quarterly with this being the first issue. We also want to introduce Michelle Skowbo and McKenzie Taylor on accepting the Blog Co-Editors position. Both the blog and the newsletter are looking for contributions.

I want to thank everyone for their support during this very difficult time. I feel our organization is getting stronger everyday. Our members are the best and the board appreciates you.

Susan Gear

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Words from the Editor

Kara Mac Donald

As shared in the Letter from the President, this issue of the CATESOL Newsletter is the first issue (54-1) in the return to a quarterly format, opposed to its recent monthly publication format. The rationale for the adjustment is to offer readership pieces that are more substantial in each issue addressing current ELT and CATESOL topics, recent association events and publicizing upcoming events. The newsletter will be structured around column categories and will be published based on invited pieces and member submissions. Special column categories will be included as appropriate. This issue features a Message from the President, Susan Gear, where she shares information about the Spring Virtual Conference and other topics. The Feature Article this quarter is from President-Elect, Anthony Burik, where he shares a reflection on his CATESOL journey to President-Elect. Next, there is a Chapter Report on the Los Padres Chapter Conference, followed by an IG Report from the Research Writers-IG in advance of a March webinar. A new quarterly column is the Member Spotlight, and for this issue the limelight is on the new Blog Editors, McKenzie Taylor and Michelle Skowbo. This is followed by information about the 2021 Virtual Spring Conference by the conference co-chairs, Song Hong and Kimmie Tang. The issue closes with another new quarterly column, Member Forum, offering interventions for screen fatigue in response to prolonged online instruction by Federico Pomarici. Throughout the issue, look for announcements regarding Call for Submissions for the Blog submission. Spring Virtual Conference registration information, and a Call for Proposal Submissions for the CATESOL Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Grant, and upcoming events in March and April. Lastly, find information on how to express interest and submit content to upcoming issues of the CATESOL Newsletter.

Feature Article – Reflections from the President-Elect

Anthony Burik

In October of this year, I will become the President of CATESOL. It is simultaneously an exciting and anxiety-inducing prospect! With CATESOL elections coming up this spring for new Board members to join with me in the fall, I have been thinking about how I first got involved in this organization and how valuable my time with CATESOL has been personally and professionally.

I went to my first CATESOL Annual Conference in San Francisco in one of my first years at an ESL teacher, but the event that really got me involved in CATESOL was a small workshop at Laney College in Oakland in the spring of 2008. I enjoyed the presentations and the chance to interact and “talk shop” with the other attendees. That has always been one of the strengths of CATESOL, the willingness of so many to share ideas and resources with other educators dedicated to improving the lives of our students and our institutions. That fall, I joined the effort to revive the Bay Area Chapter and stayed with the Chapter for the next five years, with the honor of serving as the Chapter Coordinator at the end of my time in the chapter. I met so many great folks along the way in the Bay Area and from across the state as well by assisting with a few Regional and Annual Conferences during that time. I have really lucked into an amazing network of people by getting involved and pitching in.

Inspired by my time in the Chapter, I decided to run for a Board position, to which I was elected. I served on the Board for the next three years as the Assistant and then Chapter Council Chair, working with other Chapter Coordinators around the state. At the end of my term, I took a short break and then asked the Board to consider a new Outreach Coordinator position to better connect the work of the organization with both CATESOL members and our colleagues around the state who might not know CATESOL as well. I appreciated my fellow Board members' interest in and openness to this position and appointing me to do this work. Finally, last year I decided to run for CATESOL President with the encouragement of others whom I've known for years from our work together in this organization. Working at the Board level has given me the chance to see the value of CATESOL at so many levels and think about how our organization can best be of service to our field in the future.

I also feel that my work in CATESOL helped me obtain my current position as I was able to highlight the work I have done with CATESOL and how it would benefit my employer. I think they understood during the interviewing process how my dedication and varied experience would be an asset. I have heard similar stories from other ESL colleagues about how their work with CATESOL gave them a leg up when looking for and applying to job opportunities.

We are still in the midst of this extraordinary global pandemic that has upended all of our lives and cut us off from the connections with our family, friends, and colleagues that are a part of our daily lives under normal circumstances. Many of us don't have the capacity for one more thing right now. If you do have some time, however, and want to get more involved in CATESOL, we welcome your participation. There are so many ways to help out. We have always relied on the generosity of volunteers, and now more than ever, our colleagues at all levels of the organization have been working hard to provide a wide variety of professional development to members tailored to the virtual environment we are currently in and steer our organization through the tumult of the last year. I'm also excited by our diversity, equity, and inclusion focus in CATESOL, and I look forward to helping continue this effort in the months and years ahead.

If you can, consider getting more involved in CATESOL this year and helping us move our organization forward. If you want to learn more, email CATESOL at catesol@catesol.org or you can complete our revised Volunteer Interest Survey and we'll be in touch. Again, you can email catesol@catesol.org for more information and how to locate that survey. Thank you for everything you do for your students and our field. Here's to a much brighter 2021!

Call for Newsletter Submissions

The CATESOL Newsletter is now quarterly, published at the beginning of March, June, September and December each year. Invited submissions will be included, and member submissions are highly encouraged. Submission deadlines are the 15th of the month prior to publication (i.e. February 15th, May 15th, August 15th and November 15th). If you have something to share, or if you have someone you would like to recommend to contribute, feel free to email kmacd@rocketmail.com

The CATESOL Newsletter
Call For Submissions

Hear ye! Hear ye! All ye scribes!
The **Newsletter** is accepting submissions
on an ongoing basis
for articles 500-1,000 words
with an option to include an image.

Contact the Editor
the CATESOL Newsletter
www.catesol.org

Email submissions to
Kara Mac Donald
kmacd@rocketmail.com

Los Padres Chapter Event Report – "Pivotal Moments"

Randall Rightmire, John Robertson, Nancy Kwang Johnson, and Annette Flower

On Saturday, February 6, the Los Padres chapter held a virtual chapter conference with the theme "Pivotal Moments." With over 50 teaching professionals in attendance, the conference focused on pivoting to remote teaching in the pandemic era.

The conference featured a plenary address by noted author Keith Folse, "Increasing Student Interaction and Motivation in an Online Language Class." In his warm and witty presentation, he was bursting at the seams with bright ideas about what to do – and what to avoid doing – as an asynchronous online educator. Currently studying German (not his first second language!) in an asynchronous online program, Folse raised the following questions. Who is here with me? Who can I study with? How do you learn a language alone – outside of class? Folse underscored the importance of getting to "see who the other human beings in the room are." Within an online instruction environment, he noted, instructors may engage their students within and beyond the classroom by deploying the LMS's "People" button, pairing students as conversation partners, and giving students points for viewing each other's Flipgrid videos.

The conference also featured several notable workshops and discussions. Gretchen Bitterlin (SDCCD), Betsy Parrish (Hamline University), and Donna Price (SDCCD) presented their panel discussion, "Successful Tools and Strategies for Teaching Adults Online." The presenters began by asking "how we transfer what we know about good teaching to an online platform." Focusing on "engagement, interaction, and relevance to learners' lives," they demonstrated presentation software, chats, online polls, and online quiz apps.

Belinda Braunstein, from UC Merced, led a hands-on workshop in which participants learned how to retrieve images from Creative Commons, arrange them on a PowerPoint slide, capture their image, and load it in Zoom as a background. Braunstein noted that an instructor could use the same workshop techniques to create slides for Taboo and similar games, for higher learner engagement.

Keith Corona of UC Santa Barbara presented a workshop, "Leveraging Google Sharing for Collaborative Assignments," demonstrating how he uses Google docs with virtual drives and folders to facilitate writing, commenting, and revising for university-level students. Google Drive serves as an online cloud platform that has the same capabilities and functions as an LMS platform. Students are more engaged in the writing process as they are able to respond to their instructors in "real time." Students are held accountable throughout the writing process, while the instructor emerges with a heightened awareness of the students' individual writing styles and learner profiles. Corona demonstrated how students and instructors locate shared Google documents using "breadcrumbs" (file pathways) and domain-specific links that designate link recipients as either viewers, commenters, or editors.

Laiyin (Tiffany) Lao of Irvine Valley College presented her paper on "The Relationship between ESL Learner's Motivation, Willingness to Communicate, Perceived Competence, and Frequency of L2 Use."

She took participants on a deep dive into the evolution of theories of motivation over the past few decades, and the interplay among motivation, willingness to communicate, perceived competence, and frequency of L2 use.

Alisa Takeuchi (OTAN/Garden Grove Adult Education) showed how instructors at the community college level can create interactive, authentic remote assessments for beginning adult learners using Zoom and Google Tools. In her personable presentation, participants learned about the OTAN resources available on many different styles of formative assessments ideal for EL Civics Tasks.

Merve Beyazit Taner of the University of San Francisco and Elif Konus from California College of Communications captured our collective imagination in “Practical Tips about Integrating TV Sit-coms in ESL/EFL Classrooms and Technology for All Language Skills.” Using video footage that is already freely available on YouTube (e.g., *Friends*), a teacher can modify episodes using the freely available “iSLCollective” app, which also allows users to utilize the labors of their fellow teachers. Taner and Konus further showed how to access and modify sentence formation activities for all classroom demographics.

NNLEI-IG Webinar

The NNLEI-IG coordinators will be discussing the importance of inspiring and motivating students and will be sharing ideas that instructors can easily incorporate into their practices. Also, we would like to hear what you do to inspire and motivate your students.

Members Free & Non-members \$5

More Info: <https://mms.catesol.org/Calendar/moreinfo.php?eventid=30431>



TOP Webinar

Ellen Lange will explain how she developed a method for teaching the “new intonation” and will lead a workshop on how to teach it. She will also comment on how and why this “new intonation” makes ESL/EFL speakers more easily understood, particularly in situations where they are using more complex sentence structures, such as in academic presentations.

Members Free & Non-members \$5

More Info: <https://mms.catesol.org/Calendar/moreinfo.php?eventid=28702>



Research Writers-IG Pre-Event Report – Multimodality and the Peer-Reviewed Journal

Sonia Estima



Video Link: <https://youtu.be/ZoDFdIVRVHAbE/ZoDFdIVRVHAbE>

The inclusion of images, video and sound into composition and writing courses has increased exponentially in recent years. However, in spite of all the recent advances in technology, academic work continues to be published predominantly in the traditional print text format. The number of scholars who are actually producing multimodal works is still limited, and leads to the question of what counts as scholarship, and a call to challenge existing academic forms.

Researchers and scholars trying to incorporate multimodality into their own work, still face obstacles and questions as to whether such work will count towards tenure or promotion in the university setting. This disparity between what scholars can teach versus what they are expected to produce should be questioned and challenged (Anderson, 2006).

In the words of Literat et al (2018): “. . . now that we can easily produce, preserve and distribute multimodal content through digital channels, the limitations of paper-based formats should no longer define what counts as scholarly knowledge” (p.568).

And yet, that seems to be far from the reality encountered by scholars trying to produce multimodal works in universities across the US (Archer, 2017; Ball, 2004; Literat et al., 2018). In the following video, Chery Ball (2015) discusses her own questions and challenges in creating a digital tenure portfolio:



Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9RzFK-rWz0&feature=youtu.be>

The issue of balancing the affordances of multimodality and the practical reality of producing multimodal works in the traditional academic context, continues to challenge researchers trying to produce multimodal scholarship. A large number of researchers and scholars continue to engage in the discussion of the inclusion of multimodality, but continue to publish their own work in the traditional written text format (Literat et al., 2018; Ball 2004; Archer, 2010).

In the traditional text-based forms of composing, images or video may be included, but the written text is clearly the most important aspect of the piece. The other multimodal elements may serve as illustration, but the text is what carries the main argument, following the traditional criteria for scholarly work (Ball, 2004). When it comes to academic discourse, there has not been as much exploration of what argumentation may look like in visual, oral, or other alternative modes (Archer, 2010).

Students are traditionally taught how to conduct and develop academic argumentation as a traditional form of work expected in higher education, which is done in the form of the written essay. The form of the written academic argument has a long and established tradition and has taken a fixed format with very specific criteria to be followed. In the academic discourse, knowledge is presented in a logical and linear sequence, supported by evidence – following the rationalist paradigm with its focus on logic, evidence, and citation (Archer, 2017; Anderson et al., 2006; Andrews et al., 2012).

The academic journal has long been considered the standard for disseminating scientific and scholarly knowledge; and publishing in academic journals is still considered a requirement for tenure advancement opportunities in most universities. However, the great majority of academic journal publications is still not yet able (or willing) to accept multimodal works. The reality is that publication requirements are still primarily text-based, which in turn also shape the type of work scholars normally end up producing if they wish to be considered for promotion and career advancement. Most academic publishing opportunities still limit scholars to presenting their work through text, with the occasional addition of images or graphics, sometimes limited to an appendix at the end of the work (Ball, 2004; Anderson et al., 2006; Cope & Phillips, 2014).

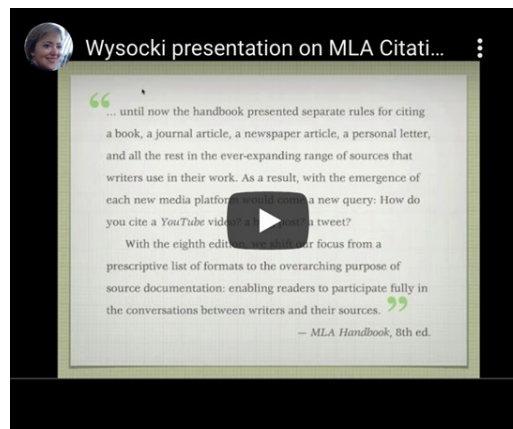
In the following Ted Talk, Stone (2016) advocates for making academic work more accessible to the public in general and also offers some insight and questions about how academic research and publishing work in universities in the U.S.:



Video Link: https://www.ted.com/talks/erica_stone_academic_research_is_publicly_funded_why_isn_t_it_publicly_available?language=en#t-52147

New technological advances create new possibilities and open up new avenues for academics, researchers, and publishers to produce multimodal works. It is true that most academic journals now have an online presence and researchers expect to find a digital copy of all print publications (Cope & Phillips, 2014). But, it is important to note, that many of these digital publications are simply PDF copies of the print magazine. One must be careful to differentiate the terms digital and multimodal. Terminology can be misleading and the term digital may at times be used to mean just about anything that is to be viewed on a screen, but may not necessarily refer to multimodality (Ball, 2004).

When working with multimodality, there are still many unique challenges and considerations. One specific challenge of working with video clips, for example, is the issue of attribution, copyright and fair use (Wysocki, 2005). In the following video, Wysocki (2017) discusses the added challenge for multimodal works regarding the complexity of creating citations to the ever-increasing diversity of source formats:



Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBdF2BLDvnc&feature=youtu.be>

Another compounding challenge in working with new media formats is the question of archiving and distribution. New and different platforms and programs are arising all the time and as older technology becomes obsolete, it creates problems for accessing older materials that are no longer compatible with current devices (Wysocki, 2005; Kuhn, 2013).

In addition, working with multimodality requires a whole new set of skills from the researcher in terms of media editing and visual composition. Aesthetics takes on a more prominent role in the creation of multimodal works. Researchers need to shift the work process and need to become also designers and learn to attend to form as well as content (Blevins et al., 2015).

This focus on the visual aspect of the work, leads some critics to question whether these visual elements may become distractors, taking away from the scholarly value of the work (Ball, 2004; Gourlay, 2016). Many scholars, while interested in the new affordances created by new media, do not yet know how to compose in these new formats; and they may question how to approach and how to assess the scholarly value of these new forms of publication. We must continue to stress the importance of making sure images, videos and other multimodal elements contribute to the argument, not merely serve as decoration (Ball, 2004). We have to create standards for digital scholarship. They should be firm enough to ensure rigor yet flexible enough to allow for continued innovation (Kuhn, 2013).

Multimodal texts require new forms of reading; it is no longer linear, no longer organized sequentially or intended to be consumed from beginning to end. The overall structure of digital texts and websites is much more a matter of design and layout and may be taken as a whole and as a collection of individual parts that contribute to the overall meaning of the whole (Van Leeuwen, 2011).

By promoting and valuing different ways of thinking and expressing knowledge, multimodal research can help expand participation in the production of knowledge and help expand the consumption and the audience for academic work beyond the academic circles (Literat et al., 2018). Multimodality opens up new doors and offers the potential to expand the reach of scholarly work outside the walls of the university. It is important to recognize the historic value, the current state and the challenges faced by the academic journal, since it is still considered by many as the standard measure of scholarly work (Anderson et al., 2006; Ball, 2012; Cope & Phillips, 2014).

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RW-IG Webinar

The upcoming session will address multimodal writing as one component of various forms of publication, which will be examined around the workbook, "Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks", by Laura Belcher (2019). Several chapters are highlighted during the session to provide attendees insight into drafting a manuscript and structuring the writing process.

More Info: <https://mms.catesol.org/Calendar/moreinfo.php?eventid=30749>

CATESOL Professional Development

Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks

RW-IG Presenters:
Sonia Estima and Kara Mac Donald
Sun. Mar. 14, 12-2 pm PDT

Writing instructor
Grad student
Researcher

Info and Registration
Write article in 12 weeks
www.catesol.org

Member Spot Light – New Blog Editors

Michelle Skowbo & McKenzie Taylor

CATESOL's first co-editor is Michelle Skowbo, a teacher in the San Francisco Bay Area. Michelle has an MA in TESOL and an MS in online teaching and learning. She has taught English as a second language for about ten years, working in IEP and adult education programs. At the beginning of her TESOL career, she was a language assistant in France, and she also taught composition for a year at Hartnell College. Her favorite teaching topics are writing, grammar, and digital literacy. When not working, she enjoys baking and reading, and she occasionally dabbles in web design. She hopes that one day she will be able to travel internationally again and remind herself of how it feels to be a foreigner.

Michelle's CATESOL volunteer experience includes being a coordinator of the MWIG (Materials Writers Interest Group) and a room host at the 2020 conference. As a new co-editor of the CATESOL Blog, she looks forward to learning from the writers in our teaching community and staying informed on current issues and trends. She hopes that the CATESOL Blog will continue to be a fun, useful, and accessible resource for English teachers!

CATESOL'S second blog co-editor is McKenzie Taylor. McKenzie has 10 years of teaching experience, and has taught English and Humanities to students at the middle and high school level. She is currently the English Language Learner Coordinator for a charter school network in San Diego. With 10 years of education experience, she is excited to use her skills and expertise to enhance the CATESOL blog.

Originally from Houston, Texas, McKenzie is a long-time student of the Spanish language and regularly uses her Spanish skills in communicating with students and their families. She knows the trials and triumphs that come with learning a new language and applying those skills in real-world situations.

McKenzie is a fairly new member of CATESOL, and being blog co-editor is her first volunteer experience with the organization. She is excited to learn more about the important work that the organization and its members are doing. She is equally excited to help create opportunities to share that work via the blog.

McKenzie and Michelle would like to encourage readers to submit postings for the CATESOL Blog. These pieces should be on the shorter side (200-800 words long). They would love to get your reflections on using new technology, managing classes online, teaching history, and lesson ideas for February holidays and events. Please email your submissions to meskowbo@gmail.com and McKenzie.Taylor@siatech.org.



The
CATESOL
Journal

Visit

[http://www.catesoljournal.org/
call-for-submissions/](http://www.catesoljournal.org/call-for-submissions/)

**Calls for Submissions:
Special Theme Issues**

***Anti-racist Perspectives,
Practices, and Policies
in TESOL***

Proposals due March 31, 2021

Spring Conference Information

Song Hong & Kimmie Tang



You are cordially invited to the CATESOL Spring Virtual Conference 2021 on May 7 and 8. Keep an eye out for conference registration in early March. For proposal and registration information, visit [CATESOL Spring Conference](#).

With current challenges in English language education, our spring conference explores the themes of transformation, inclusion, diversity, and engagement. Our goal is to embrace the new landscape in education and foster innovation with a positive outlook. We hope you can join us virtually to share your expertise and insights.

CATESOL Spring Virtual Conference 2021 Committee

Friday, May 7, 2021: 1 pm-7 pm PDT

Saturday, May 8, 2021: 9 am- 2:30 pm PDT



This special grant award focuses on mentoring and training five ESL/ELL educators from CATESOL's levels (K-12, Higher Education, Community College, Adult Education and Intensive English Programs) about best practices regarding racial and social justice, curriculum redesign, and implicit bias training.

Application Process: 1) Teachers who are interested will complete **an expression of interest** (EOI) form. Simply answer basic personal contact info and five questions. 2) The EOI is due by **March 15, 2021**. The responses will be reviewed by the end of March by a small committee. 3) The selection

More Info: <http://www.catesolfoundation.org/diversity-equity-inclusion-grant.html>

Member Forum- Mind Wandering, Implications for Teaching and Learning

Federico Pomarici

Perhaps, you are reading this article while you are keeping an ear open for your tea kettle to whistle; or maybe, you just sat in front of your computer to let some steam off after another dispute with your noisy neighbor and decided to take a look at that CATESOL tab you left open since yesterday. Either way, you are only *somewhat* here, reading. In other words, your attention is not completely focused on this very piece. That is because your brain cannot execute two separate, concurrent thinking processes. You either read or you don't. In fact, right now your brain is quickly transferring your attention among "attentions" (reading or your tea kettle.) In effect, "when most people refer to multitasking, they are really talking about switch tasking" (Crenshaw, 2013).

Enter mind-wandering. The definition I believe best illustrates various facets of this cognitive process, is given by Christoff et al. As they put it, mind-wandering is *"a special case of spontaneous thought that tends to be more-deliberately constrained than dreaming, but less-deliberately constrained than creative thinking and goal-directed thought"* (2016). For our purposes, from a learning standpoint, it derives that mind-wandering is a form of unintentional, spontaneous, stimulus independent thought, one that diverts our attention from what we were originally trying to do, by intruding into the task at hand. It is, therefore, another form of distraction that depends on internal factors. Thus, it seems only consequential that many studies on mind-wandering have shown negative effects on learning and cognitive performance, in particular on reading comprehension.

As COVID-19 forced us to move to online education, we have started seeing a decrease in student attention during instruction for at least two reasons. On the one hand, as a limited cognitive resource, attention has been challenged by the relocation of learning experiences to online platforms. On the other, the pandemic has also magnified students' feelings of anxiety. As several studies have shown, anxiety greatly impacts how attention operates (Pacheco et al, 2007).

But why does the mind wander? Research has demonstrated that mind-wandering arises when the brain starts considering and balancing costs versus benefits of a certain cognitive activity. As I am doing something, my mind starts focusing on other goals and thoughts that are deemed more satisfying by the brain. Following this logic, perhaps counterintuitively, Shepard (2019) describes mind-wandering occurrences as "smart" cognitive "move(s)," in the sense that the brain that wanders is only looking for a more rewarding interest.

As educators, we have to recognize that mind-wandering is a naturally occurring, cognitive phenomenon, and have to accept it as a given, and integral part, of the ongoing learning process. However, we should not necessarily look at mind-wandering of our students as a negative learning trait. In a 2016 interview, Kalina Christoff, principal investigator of the Cognitive Neuroscience of Thought Laboratory at UBC stressed that "Mind-wandering in the sense of the mind moving freely from one idea to another has huge benefits in terms of arriving at new ideas. It's by virtue of free movement that we generate new ideas, and that's where creativity lies." If we follow this logic, we can come to the conclusion that a mind that wanders is not an indolent mind, actually, quite the opposite. While there are many interesting studies that look at the potential positive effects of mind-wandering, we will leave that analysis for another time.

There are two interesting instances when mind-wandering mostly occurs. The first one has to do with situations when the task at hand requires reduced attention and working memory demand (Mooneyham & Schooler, 2013). Activities for stimulating working memory feature elements that both reduce students' cognitive load and help develop strategies specifically targeting working memory.

For example, adopting the segmenting principle (Clark&Mayer, 2011) by chunking the material into bite size segments, and accompanying it with a graphic organizer. This is particularly helpful with videos. This methodology is highly applicable in the online environment, especially when students engage with the material independently within an allotted time frame.

Students' lack of familiarity with the materials being presented, also stimulates mind-wandering. This has broad implication for our classroom practices. An interesting study titled "Mind-wandering during film comprehension" (Kopp et al., 2016) underlines the importance of building background knowledge to reduce mind-wandering. This study found that, in addition to individual interest, mind-wandering was reduced when the viewers were given some form of movie plot information. As teachers we are conscious of the importance of building our students' background knowledge. There are many effective methods to accomplish this, including flipped classroom strategies. Incorporating out-of-class activities that solicit students to do research, to find analogies and associations, and to make comparisons, not only helps build background knowledge but also helps maximize class time.

As educators, we should not presume that our students will be able to resolve their mind-wandering manifestations autonomously. In fact, a large body of research suggests that learners may not even be cognizant of their mind-wandering state. Therefore, it follows, that a critical step towards helping students overcome mind wandering would be to help them realize they are doing it in the first place. A common strategy for this is assisting learners with practicing mindfulness. As Mzarek et al. found, a lower number of mind-wandering episodes is associated with higher levels of mindfulness attributes (2013).

As we prepare to go back to face-to-face teaching, it is imperative that we understand the dynamics behind our students' mind wandering episodes and accept that they are to some extent inevitable. However, I wonder, if we educators should first practice our own mindfulness, to help us observe, identify and non-judgmentally acknowledge students' behaviors. This can only help us become more effective guides in our students' journeys towards mindfulness and focus.

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