

The Definite Article

WATESOL Newsletter | Fall 2020



Featured in this issue:

- 50 Years of WATESOL
- Creating and Implementing Webinars for International Teacher Development
- Making Career Changes within TESOL or to a Related Field
- A Wish list for TESOL Graduate Students in 2020

The Definite Article

FEATURE ARTICLES

50 years of WATESOL 4-9

Creating and Implementing Webinars for International Teacher Development... 10

Making Career Changes within TESOL or to a Related Field18

A Wish list for TESOL Graduate Students in 202027

REGULAR FEATURES

President’s Message 3

Interview 24

Teaching Abroad Q&A 20

Readers Respond14

Teaching Hack15

Tech Tools Corner 23

Advocacy Report..... 30

ON THE COVER

WATESOL celebrates 50 years!



Greetings WATESOLers!

In this issue of *The Definite Article*, we look back, examine the present, and look ahead. We celebrate 50 years of WATESOL with reflections from some of our past leaders, a look at the life of one of our founding members, and photos from the WATESOL archives. We consider our present circumstances, reflecting on the challenges and benefits of teaching virtually, analyzing some of the tools that allow us to teach more effectively online, and highlighting some of the creative and excellent ways that WATESOLers continue to meet the needs of our diverse students. And we look to the future, thinking about the ways that many of us will need to adapt as professionals in a field that is in flux.

We also say goodbye; this issue will be the last for Kelly Hill-Zirker, who will cycle off the WATESOL board after completing her second year of service.

And as always, we say “thank you” to all of our contributors—and to our readers, we’d love to hear from you with ideas for our next issue! Please visit [our website](#) for detailed submission guidelines.

Kelly Hill-Zirker
Heather Gregg Zitlau



President's Message

Dear WATESOL Members,

This has been an extraordinary year in many ways. Most of us have had to make significant shifts in our teaching and administrative work as a result of COVID-19. While there have likely been many ups and downs across our membership in terms of personal and professional changes, I want to highlight resilience as an underlying and ongoing theme.

Over the past century, changes have occurred that affected our profession and those who came before us. With changes in immigration patterns, political influences, global or local tragedies or catastrophes, and economic downturns, we have seen ebbs and flows in our field. When in the middle of it, it can sometimes be hard to see past the immediate impacts, but I hope that we reflect back to prior trying times as a means of reflecting forward together. Even through the difficult times, we can rise through as professionals, sometimes leaning on each other when needed.

This year, WATESOL entered its 50th year of affiliation with TESOL International, and this is a time for turning the page to the next chapter in our history. The theme of our upcoming conference reflects this resilience in many ways and calls us to think about where we have come as a field, and to naturally think forward. Our theme is:

WATESOL at 50: Innovations, Access, and Learning and Teaching in Times of Change.

October 17th, 2020

While we all attend to learn and grow as professionals, we also attend to stand in solidarity with one another. This reflects the ultimate form of collective resilience.

Thank you for all that you do. You make an impact on every student that you work with, and every colleague that you interact with.

Best of luck in the year to come and continue to make a difference in all that you do.

Kevin J. Martin

WATESOL President, 2019-2020



Kevin is the Dean of the School of Language Studies at Fairfax University of America (FXUA). He holds a Ph.D. in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment from Walden University, an MS in Linguistics from Georgetown University, and a BA and BS from the University of Dayton. He currently focuses on assessment and evaluation, teaching methods, and program administration courses in FXUA's MA in TESOL and MS in Applied Linguistics programs, housed in the School of Education. He has taught adult ESL in the DC-area, and also taught English in France to primary and middle school students.

50 Years of WATESOL

WATESOL Past Presidents

1970-1971 John Underwood	1990-1991 Mary Ann Kearny	2005-2006 Michael Roehm
1971-1972 Stanley Pickett	1991-1992 Charlotte Groff Aldridge	2006-2007 Linda Jennings
1972-1974 Carol Kreidler	1992-1993 Les Greenblatt	2007-2008 Carol Auerbach
1974-1976 Leslie A. Palmer	1993-1994 Lois Kleinhenn Lanier	2008-2009 Caralyn Bushey
1976-1978 Penelope Alatis	1994-1995 Mary Hall	2009-2010 Michal Rosenstein
1978-1980 Shirley M. Wright	1995-1996 Brenda Conerly	2010-2012 Melissa Zervos
1980-1981 George R. Bozzini	1996-1997 Shelley Gutstein	2012-2014 Jacquie Gardy
1981-1983 Jo Ann Crandall	1997-1998 Steve Copley	2014-2015 Bryan Woerner
1983-1984 Christine Meloni	1998-1999 Cynthia Carlson	2015-2016 Sharla Rivera
1984-1985 George Spanos	1999-2000 Andy Cavanaugh	2016-2017 Heather Tatton-Harris
1985-1986 Susan Bayley	2000-2001 Richard Grant	2017-2018 Rebecca Wilner
1986-1987 Grave Stovall Burkart	2001-2002 Brock Brady	2018-2019 Betsy Lindeman Wong
1987-1988 Janet Giannotti	2002-2003 Karen Taylor	2019-2020 Kevin Martin
1988-1989 Terry Bratt	2003-2004 Virginia Lezhnev	
1989-1990 Terry O'Donnell	2004-2005 Gail Doughty	



Our past presidents used these words to describe their tenure as president.

50 Years of WATESOL

Looking Back

We asked past WATESOL Presidents to describe a change they saw in WATESOL or the field during their time as President. Here are a few of their responses, along with some images from WATESOL throughout the years.



Fall Conference 1985



**Betsy Lindeman
Wong 2018-2019**

WATESOL began to look beyond pedagogy and grammar and start conversations on

ways to make specific communities feel comfortable in the classroom - in particular, undocumented students. This was largely due to the efforts of our dedicated Advocacy Chair and runs parallel to efforts within the national TESOL community to support these learners. With hope, this focus will continue, with the added dimension of providing virtual supports accessible to learners with varying degrees of formal education.

Brock Brady 2000-2001

9/11 cut off a huge source of revenue to university Intensive English Programs as it became much harder for students from the Gulf States to attend IEPs in the US. Consequently, IEPs were no longer the cash cows they had been. There were two results: (a) IEPs were increasingly closed with their roles farmed out to private schools with questionably qualified instructors, and (b) appropriately credentialed IEP teachers found that funding for professional development was seriously curtailed. This had a clear effect on the scope, the level, and the leadership of those instructors in TESOL affiliates.



Fall Conference 1991



Karen Taylor de Caballero , 2002-2003

WATESOL was founded in the late 60's, and the timeline in early 2000 had come to that point when many of our original members were starting to retire. I felt a sense of urgency to learn everything I could from everyone. Though I was there with several 'legacy' members for those 3 years, things had already shifted in ways that would change WATESOL and conferences forever: 9/11 wiped out a lot of IEPs and university programs, and that's where a lot of

WATESOL's stability had come from: folks with office hours and phones and a bit of faculty time to dedicate to their affiliate; K-12 teachers who actually had time to attend professional development events; a diverse pool of publishers that generously supported conferences; conference facilities that we could afford to book. I was barely 30 when I

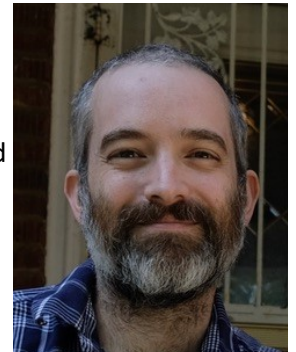
joined the WATESOL Board and I'm sure I dropped several valuable threads that could/ should have been held up as we transferred the reins from one leader to the next. Despite that, and because WATESOL is built on not just one but many volunteers, it continues to thrive, and that is very encouraging.



WATESOL turns 25, Fall 1995

Bryan Woerner, 2014-2015

We reviewed the organization structure and made several changes to hopefully improve how we operate. We also made a big effort to bring in new members and recruit presenters from outside the organization.



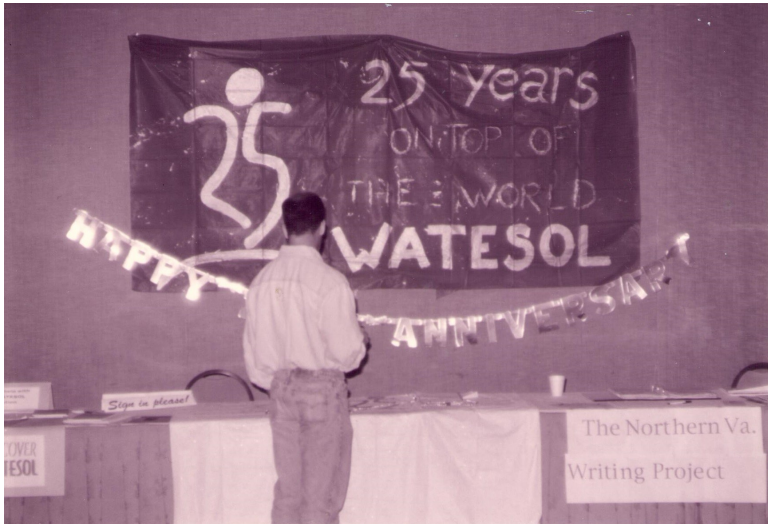
Heather Tatton-Harris, 2016-2017

In 2015-2016 we experienced the incoming Trump administration. We immediately brought in John Segota to give us a policy talk, and to set

the stage for advocacy work. We saw WATESOL professionals come together to collaborate. Our fall conference almost doubled in attendance that year; we brought in guest speakers, and panels to talk about immigration and how the political climate affects our students. It was the beginning of what we have been living for the past 3+ years.



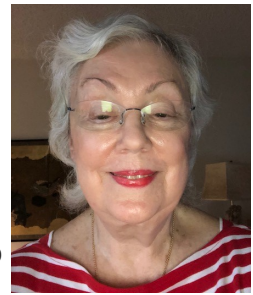
Fall Conference 2016



WATESOL turns 25, Fall 1995

Ginny Lezhnev 2003-2004

WATESOL formed an international TESOL partnership with ATES, the TESOL affiliate in Senegal. The partnership lasted 5 years.



**Sharla Rivera
2015-2016**

This is not a change that most members would see or know about, but my pet project the

year I was president was setting up some standard internal reporting for our conferences. Planning the conference is a lot of work as-is, and when Boards turn over, we tend to lose institutional memory of what was done before, what resources we still have, etc. My Board and I worked on creating an End-of-Conference Report that could summarize everything from finances to attendance, from caterers to nametags, so that future Boards would have an easier time managing the minutiae of planning a successful conference. Not a "sexy" project, but an important one all the same!



Fall Conference 2016, Keynote Address



Fall Conference 1985

50 Years of WATESOL: Reflections on a Charter Member

By Deanna Wormuth

Note from the editors: *It's always a bit dangerous to begin singling out individuals who have impacted an organization. Numerous WATESOLers have played an integral role in shaping and sustaining the organization since its inception 50 years ago; many have also played important roles in the TESOL International organization and in advancing knowledge and promoting excellence in the field of English language education. While we cannot highlight all of the individuals who have made WATESOL the organization that it is today, we hope that you'll enjoy reading about one from our earliest days. Dr. Alatis is representative of the excellence and influence of many WATESOLers throughout the years, both locally and on a broader scale.*



James E. Alatis, PhD
1926—2015

The 50th anniversary celebration of WATESOL would not be complete without recognition of one of its charter members, Dr. James E. Alatis. As a founding member of TESOL and its first executive director, his contributions to the field of language education are legendary and continue to resonate in the world of second language learning.

James Efastathios Alatis was born on July 13, 1926 in Weirton, West Virginia. The son of Greek immigrants, he was raised in a Greek community and attended an English-speaking public school. Like many children of immigrants, he served as an interpreter for his parents, becoming their conduit between the Greek and English-speaking communities. He internalized the links between language and culture as a means to foster communal understanding and developed his own passion for languages. These early experiences shaped his lifelong career.

Dr. James Alatis arrived in Washington, DC, in 1959 where he worked as an English testing and teaching specialist for the State Department and he served as a specialist in language research for the U.S. Office

of Education, becoming chief of the language section in 1965. In 1966 Dr. Alatis left the government to become the Associate Dean of the School of Languages and Linguistics (SLL) at Georgetown University. Before his retirement in 2012, he assumed a number of administrative roles at Georgetown along with leadership of TESOL International, founded in 1966. He was born for these positions; they combined academic and government roles enabling him to facilitate second language education throughout the United States.

He was a “force” as TESOL’s Executive Director bringing together teachers, researchers, and administrators to explore theories in language research, share methodologies, and develop a forum for collegiality so that collaboration became a watchword for the

profession as it flourished. During TESOL conventions, Dr. Alatis was everywhere,

dropping in on meetings, hosting receptions, chairing plenaries, encouraging people to move their program, their affiliate, and their own teaching to the next level. He personified wit, humor, and exuberance; his dedication to language teaching and research obvious to all.

“One of his goals was a TESOL affiliate in every state. He was proud to be a charter member of WATESOL.”

As TESOL grew, Dr. Alatis supported the development of specific interest sections to give practitioners forums to share ideas/philosophies and better meet diverse needs. During TESOL's early years, he encouraged the development of publications including the *TESOL Quarterly*, *TESOL Journal*, *Essential Teacher* and *TESOL Matters*. He lent his tireless energy and enthusiasm to the development of TESOL affiliates throughout the United States as the need for English as a second language instruction grew throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

One of his goals was a TESOL affiliate in every state. He was proud to be a charter member of WATESOL and his wife, Penny, served as one of WATESOL's early officers. For years, he was a presence at WATESOL annual meetings. He also recognized the importance of developing TESOL affiliates outside the US. He understood that the demand for English language instruction could not be provided solely by native English speakers; it would also require dedicated nonnative English speakers to deliver instruction in English as a Second Language. Dr. Alatis expanded TESOL's horizons, again, as he sought to establish TESOL affiliates worldwide. He

spearheaded JALT, the Japanese Association of Language Teachers and, today, when enumerating TESOL conferences, we include among others MEXTESOL, TESOL Peru, and TESOL Greece, now in its 41st year. He brought people together – to share ideas and a love of learning.

Dr. Alatis recognized the power of language. He knew it could be a cog in the engine of economic development as world markets became increasingly global. He knew it was a tool to develop bridges of understanding among peoples as they shared cultures. He recognized the value of providing instruction in the less commonly taught languages. In an effort to keep language education on the national government agenda, he founded the Joint National Committee on Languages (JNCL) and collaborated with the National Council on Languages and International Studies (NCLIS).

Languages were his passion. Helping others to love languages as he did was his mission and joy. While he traveled the world in support of TESOL, Washington, DC was his home. As WATESOL proudly reflects upon its growth and development over the past 50 years, may we honor a visionary in language education, Dr. James E. Alatis.



Deanna Wormuth
Former Director ELC, Georgetown University

Creating and Implementing Webinars for International Teacher Development: A U.S. Department of State Public Diplomacy Outreach Tool

By Kate Bain



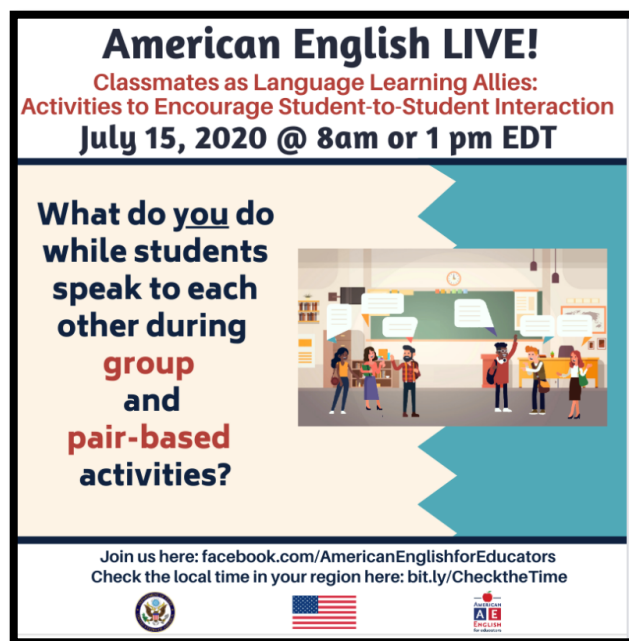
Kate is currently the Global Program Officer for the Online Professional English Network (OPEN) Program at the U.S. Department of State's Office of English Language Programs (OELP), in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Since 2016 when she joined the OELP team, she has also served as a Senior Digital Media Strategist and been involved in domestic outreach and social media. She holds a Master's of Reading Education from Towson University, a Bachelor's of Arts in ESL Education from the University of Northwestern, and a Certificate of Social Media Management from Georgetown University.

In this article about a U.S. Department of State program, I will share program aims, audience characteristics and needs, and best practices for working with TESOL professionals to create and deliver successful webinars for teacher professional development. I hope that you find it not only interesting, but also useful as you consider ways that these best practices might apply to your online teaching or training contexts.

Introduction and Overview of the Program

Since 2010, the U.S. Department of State's Office of English Language Programs (OELP) in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) has been developing and broadcasting webinars for foreign English language educators around the world. Originally produced through Adobe Connect, they have more recently been broadcast through the Zoom platform and streamed live to the [American English for Educators Facebook](#) page. Each year, there are three series of six webinars, for a total of 18 webinars per year on topics such as Communicative Language Teaching, Critical Thinking in the EFL Classroom, Media Literacy Strategies in English Language Settings, and many more. The sessions are presented by U.S. TESOL experts and hosted by a virtual team based out of OELP and in partnership with FHI 360. Participants can receive digital badges for attending individual sessions by responding to a short quiz about each session and then receive e-certificates from their local U.S. Embassies if they attend at least four out of the six sessions. During the most recent series, held from May to July of 2020, an average of 446,356 Facebook users were reached each webinar day. The average number of responses to the digital badge quiz at the end of each webinar was 4,085.

Over the years, many participants have taken part in multiple live sessions. When gathering is not restricted due to the current crisis, viewers often gather at local U.S. embassies, [American Spaces](#), or at their schools or institutions to view the webinars in groups and discuss the topics presented before and after the presentations.



Graphic posted prior to the most recent webinar on student-to-student interaction, which received 714 reactions, comments, and shares.

Participants can also respond online to discussion questions posted before each session on the American English for Educators Facebook Page or in the closed American English Ning (a community of practice where resources, recordings, and discussions are held related to each webinar).

Program Aims

As previously mentioned, the Office of English Language Programs (OELP) is part of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) in the U.S. Department of State. This bureau's mission is to "increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange that assist in the development of peaceful relations." (History and Mission of ECA, n.d.) With that mission at the forefront of strategy, OELP "designs and manages programs to promote language learning and support the teaching of English in countries around the world" (Office of English Language Programs, n.d.). The American English Live Webinar series is one of the many programs that OELP utilizes to achieve public diplomacy goals through English language programming. The program aims to provide free, high-quality professional development for international English as a foreign language (EFL) educators, teacher educators, and administrators and to provide student-centered, practical ideas that the audience can use with minimal further guidance or resources (Benucci, et. al, 2020).

"The principles of creating quality content, using multimedia purposefully, planning for opportunities for viewer interaction, and having a prepared and organized team guide the development and implementation process for each webinar."

Audience Needs and Support

With a vast audience of thousands of global educators, audience needs are diverse. Based on years of production and typical audience comments, interaction level, and frequently asked questions, OELP creates webinars with an audience in mind of a B2 CEFR level of English and with some, but perhaps not extensive, teacher development. During each webinar, considerations participants may have - such as dealing with large class sizes, varied levels of technical or physical resources, and diverse language levels of learners - are kept in mind.



Comments and chat

Interaction Opportunity	Example
Prediction	What challenges might you face when trying a new grouping arrangement in class?
Application or recall	Which curriculum design principle should this teacher use as a next step?
Reflection	When do you feel most confident in the classroom?
Personal experience or opinion	How do your students respond to activities that involve getting out of their seats or moving around the class?
Open-ended short answer	Name one of your favorite ice-breaker activities.
Do an activity	Create your own sentence using the prompts shown here. Let's see who can be the most creative!

Interaction opportunities and examples encouraged throughout the development process.

Creating Engaging Webinars

The principles of creating quality content, using multimedia purposefully, planning for opportunities for viewer interaction, and having a prepared and organized team guide the development and implementation process for each webinar.

During each live session, there is a high level of moderator support, as staff and/or consultants are on hand to address questions and comments in the Zoom chat box or in Facebook comments. Participant engagement is also fostered through the use of multiple questions for the audience throughout the webinar. The host and presenter share those thoughts, ideas, and comments verbally when possible to acknowledge those participants and foster a sense of community. Webinar staff suggest the following types of interactions to presenters to provide for multiple ways for our audience to be involved (Benucci, et. al., 2020).

Presenter Preparation

Presenter preparation for this program is extensive and deliberate. A call for proposals is issued two to three times per year by the Office of English Language Programs. Staff select proposals and presenters based on their expertise and the quality of the proposals submitted. Once selected, presenters are compensated through OELP's cooperative agreement with FHI 360.

Webinar development begins with an initial call four to six weeks prior to the live session during which staff go over project deliverables, audience needs, formatting and video considerations, and brainstorm ideas for the presentation. The rehearsal for the live session is held one-two weeks prior to the live version. Webinar staff then request or suggest changes to improve the final product and to ensure that the webinar will allow for the highest level of engagement and practical value for each participant. Presenters often express that they enjoy having the opportunity to receive professional feedback and to work closely and collaboratively with the webinar team.

Presenting the Live Webinar

For each live session, there are often three support staff behind the scenes (a captioner, a moderator, and the "driver" of the slides and live streaming process). Participants will interact with two staff on camera: the webinar host, and the presenter. When it's time to go live, the driver starts the live stream on Facebook from Zoom and announces the start of the webinar. A moderation document and script is shared with the host, moderator, and driver, who use those Google docs to vet and share participant questions and comments and to communicate about any technical issues. The host then introduces the session and presenter and shares participant comments and ideas throughout the session when appropriate. The presenter's job is to share their material and interact with the host. This support on the back end allows the presenter to focus on the content and delivery of the presentation, rather than having to keep track of participant comments, questions, or technical concerns.

This was a powerful and energizing experience that connected me with teachers from all over the world in a positive and unforgettable way. -Dieter Bruhn

Participant and Presenter Feedback

The webinar sessions are often very lively with high levels of positive engagement. Here are a few comments about the program or particular sessions shared during our most recent series.

Greetings from Bolivia (Sucre)! Participating at AE Live webinar series is very productive, experiences from speakers are quite relevant and ready to apply to real situations. - Jose Luis

Thank you, John, for your awesome tips. It'll help us make our classes more kinesthetic and fun. -Zafar A

Wonderful tips and ideas for this special activity. Very adaptable! -Rovatiana R.

I like this live session because it gives teachers practical and brilliant ideas to use in their class. -Huda Z.

In addition, our presenters often share their enthusiasm about participating in these events. Here are a couple of comments from them:

AE Live was amazing because it gave me a great opportunity to share my ideas and expertise with a much wider audience around the world. - Amanda Hilliard

Participant Follow-Up

As mentioned previously, at the end of each session, OELP provides a link to a quiz about the webinar. Participants who answer two out of three multiple-choice questions correctly receive a digital badge from our office for their participation. A final attendance list is also shared with Regional English Language Offices (RELOs) at various embassies around the world. RELOs can choose to issue certificates to participants who attend at least four out of six sessions. RELOs will often host certificate ceremonies (virtual or in-person) to acknowledge participants and to share other opportunities for programming and professional development provided through their offices. Participants may also stay engaged on the American English for Educators Facebook Page, a RELO social media page or group, or by participating in an online course created through OELP.

Moving Forward

Creating and implementing successful webinars is a team effort. OELP has been happy to see the success of this program and the ways in which it has built and fostered a community of teachers worldwide who are engaged and committed to the advancement of English language pedagogy in their regions. We look forward to many years of providing these resources and events for teachers and to providing guidance for navigating the current and continuing climate of online learning and engagement.

References

History and Mission of ECA | Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. (n.d.). Retrieved August 31, 2020, from <https://eca.state.gov/about-bureau/history-and-mission-eca>

Office of English Language Programs | Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. (n.d.). Retrieved August 31, 2020, from <https://eca.state.gov/about-bureau/organizational-structure/office-english-language-programs>

Benucci, H.; Low, L.; Bain, K. (2020). Opportunities to present for a global audience, Presentation, Online.

READERS RESPOND

It is not nearly as effective as a regular class. It is also more labor intensive.

Marilyn Rahilly,
*Northern Virginia
Community College*

I like the ability to get students outside of their normal routines. The preparation is often more for online, but much of it could be used again, so I try to look at it that way.

-Kevin Martin, *Fairfax University of
America*

What I dislike about teaching online is that...it is difficult to pay attention to the subtle reaction of everyone in the virtual classroom, which made me a little worried about those relatively "quiet" students who were not good at expressing themselves verbally, and who might feel ignored or lost on the computer screen.

-Siqi Song, *Hubei University of Technology
& George Washington University*

What do you **LIKE or DISLIKE most about teaching online?**

I LIKE that students are more eager to come to class. I DISLIKE having to click back and forth to upload and share files or go from screen to screen. And I MISS seeing my students faces for connecting and for getting feedback on their comprehension and smiles

-Jane Kirsch *INTO
George Mason
University*

I dislike how impersonal and distant my relationships with students still feel, despite my best efforts to bridge the gap and help build rapport.

-Stephanie L. Gallop,
Georgetown University

I love the fact that I can wear shorts. I can avoid driving ~1 hour one way to get to work. I don't miss some of the office interactions that may have interrupted work flow. On the flip side, I miss some of the office interactions that led to fruitful collaboration. I dislike teaching students who are disguised as boxes with names. I also dislike student discussions that lack authentic overlap, backchanneling, and body language (not face language). All in all, I'm grateful to have the opportunity to work with many motivated students and help them achieve their goals.

-Andrew Screen, *Georgetown
University*

As an ISTE member who has incorporated technology in the past 13 years, I LIKE how online teaching allows students to learn digital citizenship skills, allows them to become empowered learners: knowledge constructors, innovative designers and creative communicators.

-Krisztina Domjan, *American
University*

Teaching Hack: Hacking Online Tools to Enhance Learning

By Nancy Overman

The Urban Dictionary defines a hack as “a clever solution to a tricky problem.” This new series in the newsletter offers practical teaching suggestions that are immediately applicable to your classroom. Do you have a teaching hack to share with other WATESOLers? Consider submitting it for our Spring issue!



Nancy Overman is an Associate Teaching Professor in the Georgetown University English Language Center. She specializes in preparing students for undergraduate work, graduate research, and professional interactions, putting special emphasis on helping students to take charge of their own learning.

Teaching remotely has introduced all of us to new technology or at least helped us to become more familiar with our existing tools. After becoming comfortable with Zoom, I branched out to add online tools that would make my online classes more interactive and student-centered. Some of these tools are so useful that I will probably continue to use them even in face-to-face classes. Here are some of the best free online tools that I will be keeping in my toolbox.

Summer was making its picture-perfect debut in New South Wales that day in October 2011, but Mr Greg Foran hardly noticed. Newly hired away from his role as head of Australia's leading supermarket chain, Woolworth's Supermarket Division, he was set to work as a senior vice president at Wal-Mart International, the fastest growing division of the world's largest retailer, Wal-Mart Corporation. However, what exactly he would be doing is still open to discussion. It was not until sudden and somewhat mysterious departure of Mr Ed Chan, the president of Wal-Mart China, that Foran's new role suddenly emerged.

Diigo

Many people know Diigo as a bookmarking tool that allows access to any of your Diigo bookmarks from any computer. But Diigo also allows you to annotate webpages and PDF files, to save the annotations, and to share them with students. With Diigo, I can highlight words and phrases in four colors. I have a system for the colors, using yellow for new vocabulary, green for words that have unusual pronunciation, blue for entire phrases and collocations that students should learn, and pink for text features. With each of these colors, you have the option of adding a pop-up comment box. So before or during class, I can add definitions or other word forms to a new vocabulary word, indicate syllable stress, point out text organization, e.g. “This is the thesis statement,” and post challenging questions, e.g. “Find three noun clauses in this paragraph” or “How many examples does the author give in this paragraph?”



Flippity

Another great resource that I will continue to use is the set of free tools at Flippity.net. Their “Random Name Picker” creates a color wheel with your students’ names. You can create some excitement in class by spinning the wheel to decide who will answer next. Another option, though, is to “hack” this tool by making a wheel of vocabulary words or topics. A student can spin the wheel and then make a sentence with the word chosen by the wheel or speak about the designated topic. There is also a drag and drop board so students can sort vocabulary; a Jeopardy template for review and trivia games; and many more tools.

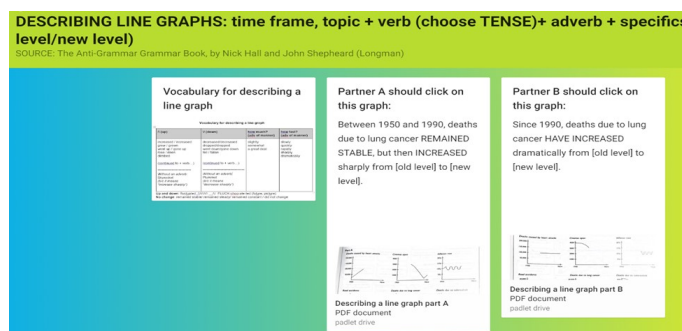
Flippity provides simple instructions for creating each tool. One caveat: Bookmark the link for each tool that you create so that you can find it later.

Answer Garden

Several online tools allow you to create and share a word cloud. One of the simplest is Answer Garden, where a teacher can post a question, share the link, and watch the resulting word cloud grow. Word clouds can be a great warm up, a pick-me-up in the middle of a lesson, a way to check understanding or emotions, or a closing activity, e.g., an exit ticket.

Padlet

Padlet provides a colorful online bulletin board where students can post comments, answers, photos, and videos. They can also respond to each other in threaded comments. A link to a padlet board is a useful place to post questions or images for discussion when students work together online, e.g. in Zoom breakout rooms. The free version of Padlet allows for three boards, which can be edited and re-used as needed.



Links to the tools described in this article:

Diigo: <https://www.diigo.com/>

Answer Garden: <https://answergarden.ch/>

Flippity: <https://flippity.net/>

Padlet: <https://padlet.com/>

Ready to use for ESL *distance learning* and *independent study*
26 eBook readers, texts, and resources
most with audio, high-interest readings, and exercises with answers

Online catalogue with over 100 books

for all ages and proficiency levels – many copyable

Free online: the Contents, a User's Guide Introduction,
printable sample Readings or Lessons, and Teacher Resources

For a 20% WATESOL discount on any of our printed materials,
please use coupon code WATE20 by 11/29/20.

www.ProLinguaAssociates.com

Celebrating 40 years publishing for ESL, since 1980!

Making Career Changes within TESOL or to a Related Field

By Betsy Lindeman Wong, MA-ESL



Betsy Lindeman Wong is a technical writer with Risk Mitigation Consulting, Inc. A former ESL program coordinator, teacher trainer, and instructor at Nova Community College, she has written e-learning materials for Burlington English and co-authored a textbook and teacher's guide for Pearson Longman.

These are challenging times. As ESL and TESOL programs reduce classes and teaching staff, now might be the time to explore other positions in the field or in a related one. Whether you aim to move to a different type of school, setting, or profession, you can optimize your search with a few simple steps. I offer them after pivoting from ESL to technical writing, a field I really enjoy.

Step 1: Use job boards to identify positions with tasks that match your experience and skills.

If you work for a university or school system, search on your website; otherwise, use large job boards like LinkedIn or Indeed. Use a keyword search to identify positions that interest you - and note the skills required for them. Possible keywords: English language, language learning, writing, editing, course design, curriculum development, training, adult learning, K-12 education, international education, professional development, e-learning.

Step 2: Match the skills and experience employers ask for with those you already have.

Make a chart. In the first column, write the skills you've noted for positions that interest you. In the second column, align your ESL experience with these skills. *Example:*

E-learning/training: Desired skills	ESL teaching: Prior experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Familiarity with a learning management system (LMS).• Prior experience in developing e-Learning or classroom courses.• Knowledge of adult learning theory; prior experience in the instruction of adult learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development and use of a class Blackboard or Canvas site.• Development of remote-learning materials for online ESL classes.• Graduate coursework in adult learning theory; experience in teaching ESL learners in higher ed.

Step 3: “Translate” your specific ESL repertoire into more general professional competencies.

Look at the skills you've identified for available positions. How do your ESL skills and experiences “translate”? Tailor your competencies, presenting them in general terms applicable to another context. For instance, if you hope to move from a university IEP program to a K-12 charter school, you might emphasize your work with English language learners or your background with standards-based instruction - without specifically mentioning adult students or the College and Career Readiness Standards.

Here's another example:

(ESL specific) *I wrote end-of-semester tests for ESL students in our university's IEP program.*

(General context) *I created summative assessment tools for language learners in an intensive program.*

Step 4: When applying for jobs and participating in interviews, don't "sell yourself short"!

You know and have done more than you think - but perhaps in a different professional setting. For instance, you may have helped students or colleagues transition to online learning. So, let's say you've created teaching aids to show IEP students how to upload assignments to your course site and participate in "live" class discussions on your remote-learning platform. You have ...*Created training materials to prepare adult learners for synchronous and asynchronous online learning.*

Step 5: Create a portfolio of learning materials and resources you've developed.

Be prepared: Many positions ask to see samples of your writing or course materials. Compile an online portfolio with samples of your work. Include links to any online materials you've created - or use screenshots, screencasts, or video PowerPoints to show them.

Examples of other portfolio materials:

- Instructions or "how-to" videos to help students access online learning
- Graphic organizers and course materials, including syllabi
- Newsletter or journal articles, particularly those online
- The literature review of your thesis, dissertation, or journal article

Step 6: Take stock of what you don't have - and find ways to add it!

Find ways to create portfolio materials and develop professional skills to enhance your career potential. For instance, if you're looking for online writing samples, volunteer to write for WATESOL's *The Definite Article!* If you're looking for training experience, present at WATESOL's fall conference! To develop skills in such areas as IT and e-learning, enroll in free or low-cost workshops or courses offered by your institution or through organizations such as LinkedIn. Consider freelance or volunteer work to gain experience in positions similar to those you're considering.

Last but not least: Be patient - and persist! As an ESL professional, you have developed a wide range of skills applicable to any educational context. You know how to create clear and comprehensible learning materials; you've developed impressive IT skills in the age of Covid-19; and you can support diverse learners with a wide range of backgrounds and abilities. With a little legwork and a flexible attitude, you'll open doors to new opportunities soon.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

*The World is
Your Classroom*
www.elprograms.org



Why should you apply?

- Prestigious Assignments: Work in universities, ministries of education, and other academic institutions on projects developed by U.S. Embassies
- Professional Development: Gain deeper experience conducting teacher training, developing resources, and organizing conferences
- Cultural Exchange: Share American values and traditions while experiencing the culture and customs of a different country



Who are we looking for?

- TESOL educators with experience and demonstrated commitment to teaching ESL/EFL
- A graduate degree in TESOL or a related field
- Personal qualities of flexibility, cultural adaptability, and resourcefulness
- U.S. citizenship



What are the benefits?

- \$35,000 stipend
- Allowance to cover costs of housing, food, utilities, and local transportation
- Round-trip international travel
- Supplemental health benefits plan
- \$500 monthly allowance for dependents
- Additional allowances for departure preparation, program activities, and more

Are you ready for your next adventure? The 2021-2022 Fellow Application is now open!

Visit our website at www.elprograms.org to learn more.



@elprograms

Teaching Abroad: Bridge2Rwanda

By Deirdre Hand

Deirdre Hand is an educator who has her Master's in Education, Curriculum, and Instruction with a concentration in TESOL. Her passion is promoting educational access to all, especially immigrants and refugees. She has taught in seven countries across five continents, with highlights including serving as an English Language Fellow in Indonesia, interning for Jesuit Refugee Service in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, Lead Teacher of a Scholarship Program in Rwanda, and the English Department Coordinator of an NGO school in Guatemala. She has developed and taught curriculum to young adults and adults and strongly believes in the power of education to transform lives.



What program did you do and where?

I worked at Bridge2Rwanda, an American NGO in Kigali, Rwanda. I was the Lead Teacher in an academic preparation program designed to help students from East Africa (Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic



Republic of Congo and South Sudan, including several students from Kakuma Refugee Camp) apply for university scholarships

abroad and prepare for university-level instruction in English.

How did your expectations match up with reality?

I knew I would be working with high-achieving, college-bound East Africans, teaching them how to prepare for the TOEFL exam and working through an intensive reading and writing program, as many were already proficient in college-level math and science.

Looking back, I should have expected but was surprised by the varying level of English my students

had. There was a difference in students coming from different countries in East Africa, and within Rwanda, from those who came from Kigali, the capital, and those who came from more rural areas, simply in terms of levels of English. As anywhere, it was necessary to differentiate.

As for where I lived, I didn't really know what to expect. I applied for the job without doing a ton of research on what Kigali was like. Obviously everyone thinks of the genocide when they hear "Rwanda" but the country is of course much more than the worst part of its history. It's a beautiful, mountainous and temperate country full of generous, kind, fun people. It was a transition of course, but manageable. Many people spoke English, but not all, so enrolling in a Kinyarwanda class was one of the first things I did, which was also a great way to make friends!

What did students expect of you?

I believe students must have expected that I would come and teach them how to earn high scores on the TOEFL and get in and succeed in university. I think many students expected to learn the "tricks" and be given a "how-to" on getting the best SAT and TOEFL scores and writing the "perfect" essay. This is the case for many students in the U.S. as well, expecting the 'how-to' in 5 simple steps!

Many students believed there was one way to do things correctly, whereas I believe the best classes I have been a part of have challenged me to realize there are multiple ways of reaching the same end, and often the “trick” is to continue practicing that skill. Of course, there isn’t one trick or tip that gets you that perfect score and there isn’t always one “right” answer. Teaching students to be critical and question the author’s purpose for multiple meanings and perspectives was something I think students were not expecting, and yet I saw them grow and change from the classes they took with me and my colleagues. They became very good at questioning and learning to accept challenges as opportunities.

What challenged you the most?

Working with such high-achieving, driven students, it was sometimes hard to keep up. I wanted to give my all to them, grade every extra TOEFL essay they



wrote, listen to every extra speaking sample they sent in. The amount of

hard work and practice they put in to do their absolute best made me want to do the same. However, recognizing that sometimes these efforts also came from a place of perfectionism (from which I suffer as well) gave me pause.

The program makes a point to teach and discuss the concept of having a growth mindset from the very beginning, and we focus on team-building; the idea is that the only way each student will be successful is if they help each other be successful. Students were coming from very competitive secondary schools, so

breaking that mindset of competition and zero sum was critical, and at times difficult. Students would put themselves under a great deal of stress wanting to be the best or do the best they could, and their self-worth was tied to that. Working with the “whole student” and having opportunities to talk about how no score on any exam can define them was important. When students received a score on their SAT or TOEFL they weren’t happy with or when they received denials from schools, reminding ourselves that failure was not a mark of their character and that we must look at everything as an opportunity to keep learning and growing was challenging, but essential.

What have you learned about yourself, your teaching style, or what you want for the future?

I haven’t properly reflected on all that I learned from my time at Bridge2Rwanda, from my students and colleagues. I know that it changed me. I learned what I was also trying to teach. To be critical. To think about what I’m teaching and why. Was it important for the literature class to include American classics before students go to the US for university? Not so much. Was it important that we draw students into literature through the ample African bodies of work? Yes. The holding up of the Western canon as the example is flawed.

Teaching students to question why they are learning what they are learning - and by that same stroke, teaching me to question why I am teaching what I am teaching (because I was told to) - is vital. When we see today’s world, there is so much inequality, so much injustice. Working with these students was the best job I have ever had.

I learned what I was also trying to teach. To be critical. To think about what I’m teaching and why.

They taught me that there is so much worth working for and that I should keep questioning and keep fighting. I don't know what my long-term goal is, but I know it involves working with young adults who want to study in university. There is a great hunger for higher education across the world, and it is very difficult to attain, especially for high-school graduates in refugee camps.



What words of wisdom would you have for a teacher thinking of teaching in Rwanda and/or a teacher who may have students coming from Rwanda?

I would say to a teacher looking to move anywhere or teaching students in the U.S., look around and see what kind of content is being taught. Is it representative of your students' culture and context? Are you perpetuating a "white savior" mentality? In my experience teaching in Indonesia, Rwanda, Kenya, and Guatemala, my students have looked to me as someone who holds special knowledge because I am from the United States. While yes, I have teaching experience and a degree, there is so much I can learn from my students, and so much they should still question about how things work, including, if not especially, the educational system the world over. Having those discussions, assigning those readings and reflections, and guiding students through those critiques is part of our jobs as educators working with students from other cultures. It is also part of our jobs to question ourselves and continue improving our own practices as educators.

WATESOL FALL 2020 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

WATESOL at 50: Innovations, Access, and Equity in Learning & Teaching in Times of Change

October 17, 2020

Tech Tips: Two Tech Tools to Help Students with Speaking

By ChristyAnn Helm and Lindsey Crifasi



Christyann Helm works at Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School as a Professional Development Specialist and has worked in ESL for 18 years.



Lindsey has been teaching literacy to adult immigrants for over ten years, focusing on adult emerging readers. Her career at Carlos Rosario has provided opportunities for curriculum, assessment and materials creation.

For many English language learners, one of the most important skills to develop is speaking. There are many ways for students to practice speaking, and in an in-person environment, these activities usually include small group conversations and *Find Someone Who's*. However, as more and more classes make the shift to virtual classrooms, there are two great



speaking tech tools that students and teachers can use in either capacity: [Flipgrid](#) and [VideoAsk](#).

[Flipgrid](#) is a free, user-friendly tool where students create short videos to share with the class. Teachers create a class set in [Flipgrid](#) and sends a QR code to students for them to join the class. Students should first download the app on their phones. Teachers can use this tool in a variety of ways. One way is as an exit ticket where teachers ask students what they learned in class. Another way that [Flipgrid](#) can be used is for small group discussions. Students can talk about a topic for a minute and other classmates can

comment or ask questions about what they heard.

What is most helpful for students is that teachers can make comments regarding a students' speaking skills directly on the video.



[VideoAsk](#) is a free tool that engages students in asynchronous video chats. Students record a short video. They then share the video link with others, possibly uploading to the LMS that the class is using. Others watch the students' videos and reply with their own videos. This is also a great way for students to not only practice speaking, but to work on their listening skills.

Both [Flipgrid](#) and [VideoAsk](#) are great tools that provide creative ways for students to perfect and practice their speaking skills.

Resources

<https://www.videoask.com/>
<https://info.flipgrid.com/>

MEMBERSHIP

Is your membership current? Do you have a colleague who might not currently be a member of WATESOL or who was once active in WATESOL but no longer is?

Go to www.watesol.org/membership-benefits to ensure that your membership is active, or refer a friend to <https://watesol.org/join> to join. Contact membership@watesol.org for questions.

Interview: An International ESL Student in US graduate school

By Siqi Song

Shuwen is an international student in the US. She is from the Inner-Mongolia province in China, the autonomous region of Mongolian minority ethnic group, where Mandarin Chinese and Mongolian are both spoken. Compared to EFL education in the coastal areas of China, Shuwen's hometown had less student mobility and there was little emphasis on English. In this interview, Shuwen talked about her experience improving English during her first year in US graduate school.



Tell us something about your academic background, and why you pursued graduate studies in the United States?

I did my undergraduate studies in Inner Mongolia University with a major in politics and administrative studies. Now I am a graduate student in international education in GWU. The reason why I study in the US was that I wanted to change a major and experience education in a different country.

What is your biggest challenge studying in the English language environment?

The biggest challenge is that I couldn't understand the conversations in class in the first semester. When I took TOEFL exam before I came, the listening section was 40 minutes. I could only focus my attention during the first 40 minutes, and I got lost for the rest of class. Also, at first, I had to translate English into Chinese in my mind and then thought about the meaning, which took a long time. I got so tired and could understand only 30-40% of the class.

What was helpful for improving academic English in the first year?

First of all, taking the EAP course with two other major courses was helpful. In EAP class, I learned different aspects of academic writing, such as the APA format, writing introduction, literature review, methods, references, etc. which assisted me a lot when I was writing term papers for other courses. EAP also built my confidence. While I found it very hard to understand the professional terms and sentences in courses of my major, I understood 80%-90% of the EAP professor's words because she used common vocabulary and sentences. I felt more confident about participating in English conversations to express myself.

“My advisor was also supportive. He often pointed out my problem directly, which made me a little uncomfortable at first. But his comments gave me clear idea of what to do.”

In addition, I gained lots of help from the professors. For example, when I wrote a 20-page term paper for the first time in my life, the professor of that course encouraged me to write the theme which I was interested in even it was not so close to the topic in course requirement.

He also provided careful feedback on not just language, but more on the organization, case examples, and presentation of ideas, which was exactly the kind of help I needed.

My advisor was also supportive. He often pointed out my problem directly, which made me a little uncomfortable at first. But his comments gave me clear idea of what to do.

Furthermore, my local American classmate once spent an hour explaining the requirement of a group project, steps to do it, and available resources. She said that I could ask her for help if I have any difficulties with my papers, for which I felt really grateful.

Do you think you are more comfortable with the English academic environment after one year?

Yes. I improved a lot in listening. Now I could understand most of words from professors. However, I still need to do better in writing, because my language was not perfect.

“Learning occurs not just in classes but also through interacting with people in various ways. “

I also formed the habit of going to the library to do reading before late afternoon classes. It was easier to engage in the classes after reading in the library for a

while because doing academic reading kept me in the mood of study and familiarized me with academic discourses that I would be socializing in during the class.

How could universities do better to help ESL students to socialize into the English academic environment?

I wish there would be a group of 3-5 people to regularly meet and share culture to improve English. We can discuss culture from different countries, or just share concerns in life using English.

Another big concern was that when I was taking EAP class, most students were Chinese and we were just talking in Chinese during class discussions, which was not good for students to

socialize into the English academic conversations. the professors did not require what language we use, because the push of using English could lead to an unequal power relation in class. However, rather than strictly demand us, I wish she could encourage us to use English during discussion, for example, by reminding us before classes, and before every discussion activity that we could try using English. It might be painful at first, but the experience in my major courses, in which I had to discuss in English with my American classmates, suggested that I could improve a lot after several weeks.

In addition, the reason why we talked in Chinese in class was that it was culturally awkward for several Chinese to speak English together. Although I wanted to have conversations in English, it would be really embarrassed since we would feel the communication was not real, and the efficiency of communication would be low due to our limited expression. It would be better if there were more teacher-student interactions, as it would be natural for students to talk in English with people who don't speak their own language; in this way, students get more chance to practice English.

Also, for classes in which there are students from multiple countries, professors could intentionally group students of different first languages together, so they would not end up in their own groups lacking the opportunity to socialize in English. I knew in many EAP classes nowadays, most students were Chinese. But still, the professor could join the discussion to make it more comfortable to switch to English.

What advice would you give to incoming international students like you?

My advice would be do not just stay with students from your home countries or hide in the comfort zone. It is very important to take part in activities around you. Learning occurs not just in classes but also through interacting with people in various ways.



Siqi Song is a lecturer of English in Hubei University of Technology in Wuhan, China. Currently, she is a visiting scholar in the Department of Education and Human Development in George Washington University.

Interested in submitting to the newsletter?

Contact newsletter@watesol.org for questions. Contributions can include:

- feature articles connecting research to practice
- book reviews
- interviews with an inspiring student, dedicated colleague, or expert in the field
- teaching abroad column
- graduate student perspectives
- teaching hacks

For more details on submission guidelines, please visit <https://watesol.org/News>

Authors are responsible for the inclusion and accuracy of their references. The articles published in *The Definite Article* reflect the research, classroom experiences, and opinions of a wide range of contributing authors and do not constitute policy statements on behalf of the organization. WATESOL welcomes articles that reflect diverse perspectives on practices and issues relevant to those in the TESOL field.

A Wish list for TESOL Graduate Students in 2020

By Sarah Knowles, PhD



Sarah Knowles is a faculty member in American University's TESOL program, specializing in language teaching methods and second language acquisition. She enjoys supporting TESOL graduate students in their professional development as instructional designers, classroom researchers, and colleagues.

In this article, I want to reflect on a core element of the TESOL world, the TESOL training program – whether it be a certificate, a graduate degree, or another continuing education experience. Many of us have fond memories of our time in graduate school (although we may also painfully remember the amount of work and sleepless nights!). We made lifelong friends and colleagues, we had the opportunity to read and discuss research, and we had the time to work intensively on crafting lesson plans and other creative teaching projects that helped us develop who we are as teachers. Studying TESOL meant time in the library stacks, in coffee shops, and in classroom observations and practical experiences.

We will all remember 2020 for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the abrupt transition to online learning and teaching. As I write this article, we are only a few weeks away from starting a new academic year entirely online. This shift has given me the opportunity to reflect on the “takeaways” that I hope to share with TESOL students, whether we are in person or online.

May You Know Your Learners

From day one, we talk a lot about needs assessment and getting to know our English language learners' strengths, interests, backgrounds, and goals. The focus on learner-centered instruction is a common one, but many of us rarely experienced it ourselves. It can be challenging to put this approach into practice, even when we have a clear understanding of its

benefits. So we constantly come back to these questions: Why are these English learners here in my class? What motivates and demotivates them? What have their language learning experiences been like up to this point? Who do they need to use English with, and why? What misconceptions do they have about learning a language? What does success look like for them? In an international area like ours, ESL teachers and students alike represent a variety of nationalities, first and additional languages, and home cultures.

Knowing your learners goes hand in hand with intercultural communicative competence, which all teachers and learners need to develop.

Knowing your learners goes hand in hand with intercultural communicative competence, which all teachers and learners need to develop.

May You Know the Language

Two common misconceptions about language are 1) language teaching is grammar teaching, and 2) native English-speaking teachers are better than teachers who learned English as an additional language themselves. Rather than being focused on the rules and exceptions of English grammar structures, I want to see TESOL students develop their awareness and understanding of how language actually works. I like to encourage them to be “language detectives,” constantly noticing the authentic language used around them and thinking about how it might be relevant to their ESL/EFL students.

This level of attention requires an understanding of how language functions in different genres, in different contexts, and for different purposes.

Just as importantly, TESOL students will be better teachers when they recognize the variety of World Englishes that their learners may encounter outside of the ESL classroom. We need to encourage a nuanced understanding of the complex status of English and English users around the world, including the status of NNESTs, Black Teachers of English (BTEs), and other under-represented professionals in the field.

May You Develop Confidence in Your Teaching

Learning to teach English as an additional language does not happen overnight. We combine reading and research with personal experience, observation, dialogue, brainstorming, practice and regular reflection. Many TESOL students lack confidence in their teaching skills, due to lack of experience or misconceptions about their abilities as NNESTs. A graduate program is the perfect place to build those

“I see TESOL programs as a fundamental bridge between research and practice, where students hone their ability to search for, read, and comprehend texts from a variety of perspectives.”

adequately design, plan, and deliver high-quality, student-centered instruction and assessment.

In addition, we focus on TESOL students’ strengths and developing their areas of interest. Countless specializations in TESOL are available to all of us: materials design, computer-assisted language

teaching skills and combat misconceptions in a supportive environment. TESOL students learn through many scaffolded assignments how to

learning, academic writing, conversation skills, content-based instruction, English for Specific Purposes, and many more. My hope is that our new colleagues in TESOL discover what they truly enjoy teaching, and then share that expertise and excitement with others.

May You Be Informed While Informing Others

“Research” can sometimes be a scary word. The reading load is heavy in graduate school, and many publications seem to be written in a dense, jargon-filled, foreign language. I see TESOL programs as a fundamental bridge between research and practice, where students hone their ability to search for, read, and comprehend texts from a variety of perspectives. However, we weigh the value of published research against our own experiences and reflections. Published research has its place alongside practitioner action research that is centered in our own classrooms. Through careful evaluation and practical understanding of existing research, graduate students gain the ability, desire, and confidence to produce their own research.

May You Pursue Professional Development

Upon graduation, students should have a stronger sense of who they are as English teachers, what they believe in, and what roles they might take on in their current or future employment. Teaching English as an additional language is not the same as, for example, teaching math. “TESOL” is not a commonly known acronym, and we may find ourselves struggling to really explain what we do to outsiders. Yes, we “teach English,” but not in the way that some might expect. In addition, many outsiders have misconceptions about English learners, second language acquisition, and educational systems. I want my students to be able to speak confidently about themselves as well as their profession, whether they are explaining what

they do to someone in another field or to a potential employer in a job interview. Graduate students should be aware of the variety of career paths and leadership opportunities available to them.

Given the limited number of full-time jobs in TESOL (especially in adult and higher education), TESOL students need to learn about the different paths that successful TESOL professionals have taken. In our program, we have guest speakers who share their experiences teaching in the U.S. and abroad, in designing materials, running programs, working as consultants, developing curricula, writing grants, creating assessments, working for government, and more. We reach beyond our local area by collaborating with organizations like Paper Airplanes, which provides online tutoring to Syrian refugees in the diaspora. My hope is that my students leave our

program with the ability, desire, and confidence to continue building and improving the TESOL field through high-quality teaching, research, innovation, and service.

Further Reading

For those of us who miss grad school reading, here are some of my favorite books:

- *Exploring Learner Language*. (Swierzbis & Tarone, 2009)
- *Intercultural Communication and Language Pedagogy: From Theory to Practice* (Abrams, 2020).
- *Learning Teaching: The Essential Guide to English Language Teaching*. (Scrivener, 2011)
- *Rethinking TESOL in Diverse Global Settings*. (Marr & English, 2019)



Great teachers need great content

Teach your best class every day with well-planned, engaging materials from ESL Library.

What you get with ESL Library



1,000+ Lessons



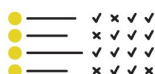
3,000+ Flashcards



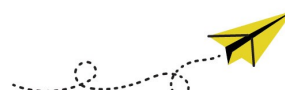
300+ Resources



Digital Activities



Reporting Tools



Online Homework

Reflections on the 2020 TESOL Virtual Advocacy & Policy Summit

By Bukky Salako Ph.D.



Dr. Olubukola "Bukky" Salako's areas of expertise are in Composition Studies and Teaching English as a Second Language. She has published work on non-native English speakers and presented on topics focusing on Sociolinguistics Analysis, Composition Theories, Language Use, and Second Language Acquisition. She is a Professorial Lecturer at American University in the English Language Training Academy.

Editors' note: Each year, the TESOL Advocacy & Policy Summit provides an opportunity for educators to learn about U.S. federal education issues and advocate for policies that support English learners and the field of English language education. Readers who would like to learn more about advocacy and policy that relates to our work are encouraged to visit the [advocacy page](#) on the WATESOL website.

The 2020 TESOL Virtual Advocacy & Policy Summit commenced online due to the current pandemic. Would it have been great to meet face to face? Of course! However, the online platform did not limit the outstanding speakers who brought the same passion digitally that they would have in person. This new online platform made it comfortable for everyone to discuss the issues in a relaxed atmosphere. One of the benefits of being online is the ability to move from room to room. This is one of the features I enjoyed about the TESOL Virtual Advocacy & Policy Summit.

I also found the topics discussed invigorating. I particularly enjoyed listening to topics such as *What's Happening Globally? TESOL Affiliate Advocacy, An International Business Perspective, Rethinking Adult Education Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, U.S. Federal Legislative Update, and Context, Power, and Empowerment in TESOL Advocacy*.

One of the conference sessions that revamped my thinking process was the International Business Perspective session. I realized that English has

become a commodity within the business world. Students who are studying English do not want to learn how to communicate in a social environment. These new professional international students want comprehensive English language classes that offer real world business simulations on how to be successful in the business world and how to use the English language to become successful in the field. To some extent, the teaching of English for business students has become a sort of a "business" in the corporate world. As mentioned by the presenter, the business-minded international students learning English are not interested in how to make friends with English speakers. Rather, they are interested in learning how to create effective PowerPoint presentations to get a promotion. Hence, this left me with a thought. As practitioners, what are we doing to meet both the professional and social goals of international students who are no longer interested in learning English for the sake of learning? Unfortunately, for some international students, they need to learn English to survive in the business world; ironically, within their own land.

In retrospect, there were many other interesting topics covered, but these few were the ones that helped me to conceptualize and reevaluate how I teach, how I interact with my ESL students, and most importantly, how I can be an agent of change in the TESOL community. I was able to leave the conference with pride that practitioners in the TESOL field are working towards changing and advocating for our students on the local and national levels.

I believe educational platforms such as this will continue to help those in the field to become resilient in their profession and to become aware of the laws affecting how they teach international and immigrant

students.

Overall, the conference was educational and successful. I believe that mini sessions should take place similar to the online program, but on a smaller scale in preparation for the summit that occurs yearly. It would be great to have smaller sessions at least twice a year online. This would better allow professionals in the field to stay active in advocacy and enact change or learn about advocacy. By continuous educational awareness, I do believe we can enact the type of change needed to make a difference in our field of work.

WATESOL Board Members 2019-2020

PRESIDENT

Kevin J. Martin

president@watesol.org

CO-VICE PRESIDENTS

Jessie Ebersole & Megan

Fullarton

vicepresident@watesol.org

PAST PRESIDENT

Betsy Lindeman Wong

pastpresident@watesol.org

RECORDING SECRETARY

Kate Bain & Allison Crolla

recordingsecretary@watesol.org

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Adam McConnell

membership@watesol.org

TREASURER

Christopher Scott

treasurer@watesol.org

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Kelly Hill-Zirker & Heather

Gregg Zitlau

newsletter@watesol.org

ARCHIVIST

Heather Tatton-Harris

archives@watesol.org

ADVOCACY CHAIR

Polina Vinogradova

advocacy@watesol.org

COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR

Stephanie Gallop

communications@watesol.org

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CO-CHAIRS

Krisztina Domjan, Tabitha

Kidwell & Glen Habbershaw

pd@watesol.org

HIGHER EDUCATION SIG

Louise Godley

higheredsig@watesol.org

ADULT EDUCATION SIG

Jennifer Campion & Philippa

Kirby

adultsig@watesol.org

K-12 SIG

Becky Miskell

k12sig@watesol.org

NNEST CAUCUS LIAISON

Eda Aladagil Yoon

nnest@watesol.org

WEBMASTER

Albert VanLanduyt

webmaster@watesol.org