

SAN DIEGO CATESOL

CATESOL San Diego Chapter Newsletter

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From the Chapter Coordinator

Transition to College: Making the Leap

Exiting an ESL program and entering a community college, university, or vocational program presents a unique challenge to our students, not just academically, but socially and culturally as well. How do we prepare our students to make this leap into a different learning context? What can we do to ensure our students have the skills needed to be successful in accomplishing their goals? What are some engaging, interactive, and effective classroom activities that can be used to make our students college-ready? For a discussion of these questions and more, please join the CATESOL San Diego Chapter as it proudly presents its annual Spring Workshop Series, *Transition to College: Making the Leap* on March 12, at the CATESOL San Diego Regional Conference at Miramar College.

Holly Bell
CATESOL San Diego Chapter Coordinator
Holly teaches ESL at CSU San Marcos and Palomar College

Read more about the organizers of this year's Regional Conference, the **ESOL Program at San Diego Miramar College**, on p. 5.



Perfectly Imperfect Book Selection: Confessions from an ESOL Book Club

by Tai Haluszka and Tina-Marie Freeman

As teachers, we often rely on thorough planning to help avoid spontaneous problems from arising. Yet as we created an extracurricular ESOL Book Club at a local community college, we consciously decided to hand over the book selection process to the club members, crossing our fingers that they would choose a book that they were able to read and enjoy. Many experienced teachers we knew stated their hesitations on this idea, but we went full speed ahead. Imagining that it couldn't really "be that bad." It didn't take long for the book club to come to a screeching halt. But what began as fear of losing member interest and scrambling to fix the error transformed into a moment of learning and success for both our students and ourselves.

On the first day of book club, we had arranged a multitude of books from which the students could choose. Most of these were listed on recommended ESOL reading lists (full disclosure: we had not read them all). It was obvious that the students were most interested in the author's popularity and any awards the book had received. Based on that criteria, the students voted and chose *A Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Díaz. We ended the session in high spirits and the promise among members to read 20 pages by the next meeting. As the facilitators, we began reading immediately and planned to read much further ahead in order to pre-teach words, concepts, and themes. Yet by page two, apprehension set in. We were barely staying afloat among the idioms, slang, and historical references, and feared the ESOL students would be drowning in it. We sent out an email summarizing the first 20 pages to help the students with comprehension and crossed our fingers that they would actually come back next week.

During that second meeting (they came back!), the students arrived shell-shocked and deeply discouraged. The unanimous vote? The book was too hard. Some students hated to admit this, and many felt a strong sense of defeat. We were at a crossroads: do we struggle through it and

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Members of the CATESOL San Diego Chapter welcome the participants of the 2015 Regional CATESOL Conference at Grossmont College. For the conference last year, the Chapter presented a three-session workshop on *Disrupting Apathy*.



CATESOL San Diego Chapter

STUDENTS SPEAK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE



**Abdullah
Althuwaybi**

from Saudi Arabia

*interviewed by
Holly Bell
California State University
San Marcos*

*Can you describe your first
day in the U.S.?*

The first day in the United States was very difficult for me because I came here and I didn't speak any English. It was difficult to find a homestay, and it was difficult for me to talk to people when I went to the restaurants. I used my phone to translate the words for them.

What English school did you go to?

First, let me tell you something. I attended a conference in the capital city of my country, Saudi Arabia. It's called Riyadh. And I met a professor there and he described to me ACLI, the American Culture and Language Institute at CSU San Marcos. It was a good experience for me. I spent two years with them learning English. I graduated just last year. Right now, I am in class, in university. I am doing graduate level work and I am proud of myself.

What university program are you in now?

It's called the PSM program: Professional Science Master's degree. Biotechnology, which is my major, I'm doing now at Cal State San Marcos. Later on, I will complete a Ph.D. if I graduate from the school.

Which part of English is the most challenging for students from Saudi Arabia?

I actually think that grammar is very challenging because it is different from my own language, so I have to understand the grammar because it is still very important for any language. I think it is the very difficult part for us. And pronunciation, how to pronounce the words, is the most difficult.

What is some advice you would give future students?

The first advice for each student is to get background information about this language before you come here. At least learn basic things. Then read and read and read. That's very important. Without reading, you won't improve your writing. Without listening, you can't improve your speaking.

What advice would you give to ESL instructors who are preparing students for the transition to university?

Actually, that's a good question. My advice for the last level is to sit in class and enjoy the lecture just as a listener. Not take the class; just sit in the class and prepare the foundation for university. A real class, a real class just for fun.

Favorite Classroom Techniques

Bob Thomas presents:

Who Is Lying?

Adapted from Grammar Practice Activities by Penny Ur

A great activity for reinforcing the possessive adjectives *my, your, his, and her*:

1. Students are put into groups of six.
2. One student then goes outside for a minute.
3. The remaining students in the group choose an object, such as a pen or pencil that belongs to one of the group members.
4. When the group is ready, the teacher brings the student from outside back in.
5. The group hands the pen to the student and this student asks the first member, "Is this your pen?"
6. That student then strongly says, "Oh no, it's not my pen. It's his pen," pointing to the person on her left.
7. Go around until everyone has denied it and then have the student questioning everyone guess whose pen it actually is. After this, send a new student outside and begin again.

The same setup can be used in a similar activity called *Detectives to reinforce to have*. In this activity, the students choose an object, then one student goes outside. One remaining student then hides the object. Upon return, the student asks, "Do you have the pen?" The first student answers, "No, I don't have it, she has it!"... and so on. These fun activities provide meaningful context and can be adapted for many other uses!

Bob teaches ESL at San Diego Continuing Education, César E. Chávez Campus.

You don't need to be a CATESOL member
to attend a chapter meeting.

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Perfectly Imperfect Book Selection, continued from p. 1

scaffold as much as possible, or do we choose a new book? Again we agreed to let the students make the decision and offered some other, more accessible, book choices. What ensued was a thoughtful discussion about what it means to put down a book, relating to the many times we had realized that a task was simply too difficult for us at the time. There was fear of giving up and feeling like a failure, but also an intense desire to read a book for enjoyment and to find pleasure in reading English novels (something that many of our students said they'd never experienced). In the end, the discussion revealed that the goal of enjoyment far outweighed a need to prove themselves. The students once again went through the process of selecting a book, yet this time relied on a new criteria.

Although it took longer than planned to get this book club up and running, we learned that admitting defeat is not the same as failing. As facilitators, we had to acknowledge that our initial plan had not met our expectations and perhaps the other teachers had good insight. The students had to acknowledge that reading and book selection takes practice, especially when it's in a new language. By admitting defeat, we were able to move forward and meet the more meaningful goals of the book club. In this way, we were all successful.

Would we allow students to choose their own book again in the future? Absolutely. But this time we might read them all beforehand and make available only those that offer a stimulating yet enjoyable level of challenge. Two books that have worked well in our book clubs are *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd and *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom.

However, we hesitate to recommend any single book without knowing the group or its goals, interests and dynamic. While there are extensive ESOL reading lists online, we have found that different groups are drawn to completely different types of books. What was most successful was to give students time to get to know each other and create a shared book club culture. We then provided a wide variety of books and allowed students to decide based on shared interests. We encourage a balance of planning and spontaneity and are ready to face any unexpected plot twists with the knowledge that it can be used for learning and reflection.

Tai Haluszka and Tina-Marie Freeman are Instructional Assistants at Miramar College, where they created their book club.



Publishers' exhibits at the Chapter workshop in October 2015 at SDCE Educational Cultural Complex met with great interest.

Featuring **Robb Hill** Newsletter Co-Editor



Robb Hill has been with the Chapter since September 12, 2014. He remembers it was a nice warm day. He has participated in the preparation of several professional development workshops and social events. His calm demeanor in combination with thoughtful observation and an eye for detail makes him a very reassuring presence at chapter meetings and events. As the Newsletter Co-Editor, he has caught many blunders and contributed several bright ideas. Way to go, Robb!!

Here is what Robb says about himself:

"I grew up in the state of Illinois. After attending Northern Illinois University, I spent two years in the Peace Corps in the country of Cameroon. During my time in the country, I "taught" an informal English class to community members a couple nights a week. It was then I thought about teaching English as a profession. I enrolled in a TEFL/TESL certificate program at San Diego State University. I have been working at the American Language Institute since I completed my certificate. At the ALI, I have worked as a teacher's assistant and as a substitute instructor. As a substitute, I am teaching a variety of classes and levels. I enjoy teaching students from around the globe as I feel I learn from them as well. I strongly encourage involvement in local CATESOL chapters. It is a great way to learn new ideas and to share information with other teachers. Plus, it is good way to network and provide you with new skills. Outside of teaching I enjoy sports, music and movies. I am hopeful that the Cubs will go to the World Series this year."

CATESOL San Diego Chapter

Two Chapter Members Receive Prestigious CATESOL Awards

Angela Webster Wins the Norma Shapiro Memorial Library Award

by Caron Lieber

This year's recipient of the prestigious Norma Shapiro Memorial Library Award at the 2015 Regional CATESOL Conference in Anaheim is Angela Webster. Norma Shapiro, the co-author of the *Oxford Picture Dictionary*, is remembered through this award for her leadership and contributions to CATESOL.

The nominee for the award must be a CATESOL member and an Adult-level ESL teacher who has demonstrated exceptional skill in at least three of the following five areas:

- innovative classroom teaching
- teacher training
- professional development
- materials writing
- curriculum development

Angela started teaching in ESL in 1980 at Santa Ana College. Since then, she has taught for Palomar College and MiraCosta College in their noncredit ESL programs. Her ESL teaching assignments have included VESL, Multi-Level, all levels of ESL, Citizenship and working in the computer lab. With over 35 years of teaching experience, she enjoys working with and learning from people from diverse populations.

A brainchild of the noncredit ESL Student Peer Mentor Program at Palomar College that was started in 1997, Angela went on to become a CALPRO Trainer of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), a contributing writer for SCANS II, and Trainer for Research Based Best Practice for Reading Communities. Her other achievements include being a contributing writer in Writing Across Disciplines (under the leadership of Sylvia Ramirez), involving her students in Service Learning Projects (one of which includes cleaning the coast of North San Diego County twice a year), presenting and volunteering at numerous conferences, earning the distinctive title of "Universal Design for Learning Scholar," and being a contributing writer on the original Career Awareness Project booklet for Palomar College.

Caron teaches ESL at San Diego Continuing Education, NCC/Miramar

CATESOL extends awards to students and teachers for various teaching levels. The awards are presented during the Annual conference each fall. Look for information about upcoming awards at www.catesol.org.

Stephanie Thomas Wins the Community College Teacher Development Award

by Gretchen Bitterlin

Congratulations to Stephanie Thomas who has won the Community College Teacher Development Award, sponsored by National Geographic Learning.

The award is awarded to a teacher who exemplifies:

- effective and inspiring teaching strategies using technology to connect students to the wider world
- effective teaching strategies that encourage students to engage with their surrounding community and make a difference in their community
- evidence of creating a rich learning experience for students
- other pioneering contributions to excellence in teaching.

Stephanie has taught for nine years in our non-credit ESL program under the San Diego Community College District. She has taught beginning level ESL, multi-level ESL in the CBET program, and is now teaching an English for Careers advanced ESL course.

Two examples of how Stephanie meets the above criteria are as follows:

This past semester, Stephanie facilitated a multi-cultural project-based activity in which students learned to describe dishes from their countries. The students downloaded images of the dishes, which were posted on the hallway bulletin board. The students then created scripts describing the food and ingredients. Under the teacher's direction, they video-taped themselves, uploaded the videos to Aurasma Studio, and attached a trigger image (food) so that when outside students came up to the board, they could download the Aurasma app and by following simple written instructions, could view and listen to each student's presentation by pointing their phone to each visual. Students were intrigued in using this technology to learn about each other's dishes and customs. Stephanie uses the same tools to animate her core text so students are exposed to reinforcement of the course content outside of class. They can place their phone over the text in their book and can hear the passage aurally.

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Write an Article for the Newsletter

If you have a **story, opinion, or a strategy** related to teaching ESL which you would like to share, please send it for consideration by the editors to catesolsd@gmail.com. For ideas and examples see **previous issues of the Newsletter** at catesolsandiego.weebly.com/previous-issues.html

CATESOL San Diego Chapter

The ESOL Program at San Diego Miramar College

Organizers of the 2016 San Diego Regional CATESOL Conference

by Stefanie A. Johnson Shipman, Conference Chair

Miramar is one of the three schools that comprise the San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) and is the fastest growing one in the District. Originally founded as a training facility for public safety in 1969, Miramar College today has nearly 10,000 students and offers over 100 associate degrees, certificates, and transfer programs. The school, which once primarily consisted of bungalow classrooms, has also grown to a state-of-the-art campus with over six new buildings that were designed with sustainability in mind, including the administration building, which received a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design) Gold certification and a possible Silver certification for the new science building.

The ESOL program is housed in the English, Communications, and World Languages (ECWL) Department. The program offers courses in integrated skills, reading, listening/speaking, and writing/grammar and serves students from the high-beginner to advanced ESOL levels. For students who complete this program of study, Miramar offers an ESOL Certificate of Performance. In addition, the ECWL faculty created an ESOL Student Orientation to introduce students to the school and its services and to help students feel a sense of campus connectedness and community. This orientation is offered each semester and has become a model for SDCCD's other ESOL programs. Miramar also has two tutoring centers on campus to which ESOL students have access. In one of these facilities, the English Center, there is an ESOL Conversation Club and an ESOL Book Club. The implementation of these services and programs for ESOL students help them on their paths to success!

Within the ECWL Department, the ESOL faculty is small but growing. Currently, there are 13 ESOL professors, four of whom are full-time. The professors in the ESOL program frequently mentor USD graduate students in TESOL, guiding them on as they begin on their teaching paths. Also, Miramar ESOL faculty are active in professional development within the local chapter and state CATESOL and TESOL. Multiple faculty members have presented at numerous conferences and workshops, volunteered for many events, served as proposal reviewers for the TESOL international conference, and had work published in TESOL periodicals.

The Miramar ESOL program and the ECWL department are honored to host the 2016 San Diego Regional CATESOL Conference and warmly welcomes you!

Like us on Facebook:
Facebook/catesolsandiego



Join the Chapter

There are **many reasons** to get involved in the local CATESOL chapter:

- ◆ Develop professionally
- ◆ Boost your resume
- ◆ Network, network, network

There are also **many ways** to get involved:

- ◆ Come to our monthly meetings or social events
- ◆ Volunteer at chapter-organized workshops
- ◆ Write an article for publication in our Newsletter
- ◆ Sign up for our mailing list

Or better yet ...

- ◆ Become a **chapter liaison** for your school



The ESOL Program, the organizer of this year's CATESOL Regional Conference, is housed in the English Building at the beautiful new Miramar College campus.

Chapter Coordinator: Holly Bell
Assistant Chapter Coordinator: Saladin Davies
Treasurer: Aldamay Rudisuhli
Assistant Treasurer: Marie Webb
Secretary: Bob Thomas
Assistant Secretary: Soo Min Lee
Website Manager: Magdalena Kwiatkowski
Facebook Coordinator: Kevin Staff
Newsletter Editors: M. Kwiatkowski & Robb Hill

visit us at catesolsandiego.weebly.com | email us at catesolsd@gmail.com

CATESOL San Diego Chapter

New San Diego CATESOL Experiences

by James Perren

Living in San Diego has been an amazing experience since arriving in July of 2015. I consider myself a Californian since this is the state in which I have lived most of my life. Although different than the bay area in Northern California, San Diego reminds me a lot of living up in the San José area.

I earned my Bachelor's Degree in Spanish and my Master's Degree in TESOL at San José State University. I also studied Spanish in Spain in the cities of Madrid and Granada. I earned my Doctorate in Education from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but I also studied at the Temple University branch campus in Osaka, Japan for the first six courses of my coursework.

I became familiar with what people do in TESOL during the time I was studying Spanish in Spain. I had some friends who were teaching English in Spain and told me that it was an interesting way to make money. When I returned to San José State University I did some volunteer work on campus to help students who were learning English. The program director of the ESL Program asked me if I could be a tutor and a volunteer teacher, so I became involved. Within one year I decided that I wanted to join the MA: TESOL Program and the rest is history.

I also taught Japanese university students for 5 years in the Kansai area near Osaka and Kyoto, Japan. It was an amazing time of my career as a TESOLer. In addition to teaching full time, I learned a lot more about TESOL through conference presentations and publication opportunities. I later had the chance to work as a teacher trainer at the Church Teachers' College in Mandeville, Jamaica as a doctoral student at Temple University. I worked with 45 K12 teachers in a 'technology for education' course. That experience made a lasting impression on my technology teaching. In both of these overseas teaching events I learned much more about culture and language; both were key happenings in my life that shaped my teaching philosophy further. What I gained was not simply pedagogical advantages, but because I was accepted and welcomed by the Japanese and Jamaican people, I understood even more about the importance of community and being accepted as a member of one even with my differences.

The two TESOL areas in which I have the most expertise and special interest in are service-learning and technology in TESOL. I have continued professional development in these two directions and attempted to integrate them into the curriculum for all TESOL courses and programs during my career as a TESOL professor. I recently completed an edited book project on service-learning in TESOL that is now available for use in teacher training programs.

I very much enjoy working with graduate students for the specific reason of facilitating a deeper level of understanding about the importance of professionalism as an English teacher in today's global context. Working with doctoral students fosters interesting and innovative ideas for research and practice in TESOL. I am passionate about facilitating the bridge between theory and practice and supporting new and important research that brings attention to ideas and issues that students prioritize.

One of my favorite books/movies that I enjoy tremendously is 'Of Mice and Men,' by John Steinbeck. There are numerous ways to integrate this material into ESL/EFL courses as well as teacher training materials and programs. For example, the colloquial language can be used to illustrate the differences between standard English and a variety of English in a sociolinguistics course, for both undergraduate and graduate students. My future plans include continuing to collaborate with CATESOL colleagues who are interested and active in the field of TESOL, especially those interested in technology and the educators who implement service-learning. Hope to see you at a conference!

James is an Associate Professor of TESOL at Alliant International University.

Monthly chapter meetings are on Fridays at 5 PM at the USD English Language Academy: catesolsandiego.weebly.com.



Reserve the dates:

CATESOL 2016
Annual Conference
Town and Country Resort Hotel
and Convention Center
San Diego, CA
November 17-20, 2016

Stephanie Thomas Wins CATESOL Award, cont. from p.4

Another strategy Stephanie uses is making other curriculum come alive by using QR codes. She creates audio files of text and links them to QR codes. She then inserts the codes into the student materials for our EL Civics lessons. By putting their phones over the written material in their packets, they can listen to the dialogues or passages outside of class. Stephanie also has students use their cell phones for other learning related activities, for example, using Kahoot.it, a quiz game tied to their phones.

Besides enriching the learning experiences of her students through this innovative technology, she has enriched our program through training other teachers to incorporate this technology. As a result of her innovative strategies, all of our EL Civics materials include QR codes to afford students the opportunity to practice their English outside of class on their cell phones or other devices.

We can't wait to see what Stephanie will come up with next to enrich our students' learning and move our program forward in the area of integrating technology.

Gretchen is the 231 Grant Coordinator at San Diego Continuing Education.