

WINTER EDITION 2021

AZTESOL NEWSLETTER

AZTESOL News is the official publication of Arizona Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. The newsletter is a place for teaching tips, conference news, legislative updates, reviews of books/journals/websites/apps, and articles on all manner of topics relevant to ESL teachers in every setting.



CURRENT MEMBERSHIP:

1,141 TESOL
professionals across
Arizona



2021: A YEAR IN REVIEW

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Ali Yaylali is a PhD candidate in the Teaching, Learning, and Sociocultural Studies Department at the University of Arizona. Yaylali has been a member of AZTESOL since 2007 and presented at many state conferences. He started to volunteer at the organization as an ESL teacher and attended the board later on. Previous positions include Rules and Regulations Chair, Southeast Region Representation, and Vice-President.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Ali Yaylali, AZTESOL President

Dear AZTESOL Members,

The academic year started with uncertainties back in August, but we are finishing the Fall term with a sense of accomplishment and great progress we made in how we educate multilingual learners through these demanding times. The AZTESOL conference planning committee, which was led by Lutfi Hussein, tirelessly worked to realize the second virtual state conference in October successfully. Focusing on the theme of “Language Teaching and Learning: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion”, this conference provided valuable insights into teaching and research in the field. What particularly got my attention was the increasing attendance by in-service teachers and teacher candidates from the border town, Yuma. I would like to thank our past president Alma Sandigo and current board member, Lydia Rodriguez-Vaughn, for their teacher educator visions and reaching out to the teachers and teacher candidates in the area. I would also like to thank Richard Bailey, former board member, for his dedication to working with educators from Mexico and sustaining our international collaboration. In the future, we would be thrilled to see more presentations from the practitioners in the field.

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“The academic year started with uncertainties back in August, but we are finishing the Fall term with a sense of accomplishment and great progress we made in how we educate multilingual learners through these demanding times.”

-Ali Yaylali

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, CONTINUED

Ali Yaylali, AZTESOL President

Interest sessions at the state conference allowed for new networking opportunities and understanding the educator needs in the state. I would like to particularly highlight the large number of educators participating in the K-12 interest section and their perspectives on educational matters. Particularly, their interest in culturally responsive education and the needs for curriculum materials stood out in our discussions. We understand how important it is for our educators to know their students very well and respond to their needs with high quality materials. We would like to continue to discuss these issues further through our communications and upcoming events.

AZTESOL is an advocate organization for the educators and learners of English. Our advocacy chair, Kate Van Roekel, continues to raise awareness among educators in Arizona by conducting training sessions during the year. I have learned substantially from Kate's work in the past years. By following AZTESOL on social media, you can stay current on advocacy topics in the state and become the voice for our students and educators.

Finally, I would like to highlight our open board positions in the organization. Currently, we have four positions to which you can apply: Vice-president, Central Arizona Regional Representative, Northern Arizona Regional Representative, and Member at Large. Board positions are open to everyone who is interested in serving and leading in the TESOL field. If you are interested, please don't hesitate to learn more about those positions by contacting us. We would be excited to welcome new members to the AZTESOL family.

On behalf of AZTESOL, we hope that you have a wonderful holiday season!

Warm regards,



Ali Yaylali, M.A.
AZTESOL President



ADVOCACY UPDATE

Kate Van Roekel, AZTESOL Advocacy Chair



[The Invest in Arizona Campaign](#)

Hundreds of Arizona educators, parents, and public school supporters volunteered all summer to gather signatures to refer three bad tax laws that would gut voter-passed Proposition 208 (the Invest in Education Act) to the 2022 ballot. While this is particularly relevant for AZTESOLers teaching in K-12, it couldn't have happened without the support of TESOL colleagues in higher and adult education as well. **Great job to all of you who took action on this issue!**

The Secretary of State's office continues to verify signatures, so we don't yet know which measures will make it to the 2022 ballot. AZTESOL will keep members informed when the Secretary of State's office announces signature verification results.

However, the fate of the Invest in Education act still hangs in the balance. Read on!

Public Education Expenditure Limit

In 1980, Arizona voters approved an expenditure limit that applies to K-12 public education. In 2000, voters passed Proposition 301, a .6% sales tax going towards public education. Prop 301 was written as a grant, and therefore, not subject to the expenditure limit. The Invest in Education Act was written in the same way, but the Arizona Supreme Court ruled that it is not a grant, and referred the case to a lower court to determine if funds raised by the Invest in Education Act would exceed the expenditure limit. We are waiting on a ruling in this case but are expecting the lower court to rule against the Invest in Education Act. Check out [this image](#) for a summary of the issue.

This Supreme Court ruling is extremely important because, by ruling that the Invest in Education Act is not a grant, they have similarly invalidated Prop 301, [placing another \\$600 million of K-12 funding in jeopardy.](#)

The legislature has the power to raise the education expenditure limit. This will be a major advocacy focus in the coming year, and underscores how essential it is that we elect pro-education officials in 2022.

#INVESTinAZNOW

ADVOCACY UPDATE, CONTINUED

Repeal of Proposition 203 (AZ's English-Only Law)

Despite bipartisan support, the bill to advance the repeal of Prop 203, Arizona's English-Only law, died in the legislature for the 3rd year in a row. Stay tuned for information on how you can help push your Arizona legislators to pass this important bill.

Federal Updates

[The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) was passed by Congress. It did not include funding for Title II adult education and literacy but it does include major investments in broadband technology and addresses digital equity issues. These could have a significant impact on students and literacy agencies that serve them. The broadband investments total \$65 billion.

The Build Back Better Reconciliation Bill:

The pared-down version of this bill is \$1.75 trillion (originally \$3.5 trillion). Title II funding for adult education has been reduced from \$3.6 billion to \$700 million. Negotiations are ongoing, and it is unclear when this will come to the floor for a vote.

Take action on these issues and more in
[TESOL's Advocacy Center](#)



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"Thanks to all of you who attended our Advocacy Panel at the AZTESOL state conference in October! It is inspiring to be a part of this community of educators working in ways large and small for "equitable and excellent education" for Arizona's English learners!"

-Kate Van Roekel

AZTESOL 2021 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

The **AZTESOL 2021 conference** was held virtually for the second year in a row, due to the COVID19 pandemic. While many were disappointed by the lack of in-person networking, the virtual platform allowed for AZTESOL members to attend more easily, we even had some international attendees! The conference theme was **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.**

BY THE NUMBERS

216 attendees

22 Global Attendees
112 Full-Time Professionals
13 Part-Time professionals
4 Retired Professionals
61 Student Attendees

38 presentations

4 vendors

"The sessions had great examples of how to use the content in our classrooms. "

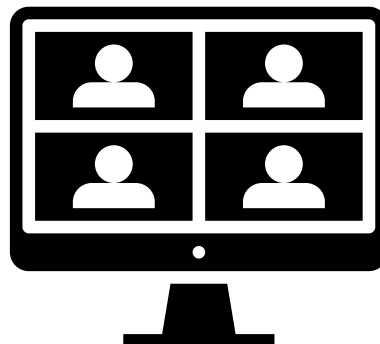
"The knowledge and expertise of the presenters and keynotes is inspiring!"

"I learned new tools that I can immediately use within my classroom."

"Excellent keynote presenters. I love "Canvas" as the platform. Very easy to navigate. "

"Being virtual made it easier for me to attend."

"There are so many ways to help our students achieve their goals."



Feedback from YOU!

MEMBER SUBMISSION: ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION ON TRANSLANGUAGING IN HIGHER AND ADULT ESL EDUCATION

Liza E. Martinez
Arizona Western College



I found the topic of translanguaging to be very interesting. I would like to learn more about how it can work in adult ESL classrooms. I hope to do an action research on translanguaging one day.

Introduction

On October 23, 2021, I had the privilege to moderate a round-table discussion at the virtual AZTESOL Conference. It was entitled, “Translanguaging and Its Promotion of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education and Adult ESL Classrooms.” I shared my journey towards translanguaging. To begin with, I had been inculcated as a graduate student with the idea that using the native language in an ESL classroom was taboo. Through the years, most of my students have been Spanish speakers. I have found that they reverted to Spanish when they questioned a concept or vocabulary; they also used Spanish when they worked in groups. Although I would stress the importance of using English, they continued to speak in Spanish. When students did not understand my explanations, I would revert to Spanish, and I felt guilty. This has been particularly true in my current ESL department; the importance of teaching academic English through an immersion approach is stressed. Nevertheless, I knew that these students who were in the lower ESL levels were having difficulty understanding their ESL teachers. The students asked me to explain in Spanish concepts they were learning in their ESL classes. I did, and I continued to feel guilty. In time, I decided to become proactive. I recalled that I.S. Paul Nation (1990) had written how translation can be used as a strategy in vocabulary development. I decided to look for articles on translation in the ESL classroom. One article on translation described the concept of translanguaging. I decided to look it up.

Emerging in the 1980s, translanguaging accepts the use of the native and second language in the ESL classroom. One of the leading proponents of translanguaging has been Ofelia Garcia. From Garcia, I have learned that bilinguals are not two monolingual speakers. Instead, when people speak, they use all the language repertoire [L1 and L2] that they have at their disposal (Garcia et al., 2017). This does not have to be at distinct times as in the case of dual language learning. Instead, the native language can be used in planned and unplanned situations. When it comes to instruction, Garcia et al. (2017) have created curricula for grades 1-12 with the goal of developing students’ biliteracy. Nevertheless, there have been few studies which examine translanguaging in adult ESL settings (Carroll & Mazak, 2017). Curiosity about this led to a proposal for the AZTESOL State Conference.

MEMBER SUBMISSION: ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION ON TRANSLANGUAGING IN HIGHER AND ADULT ESL EDUCATION

Liza E. Martinez

Arizona Western College

The Proposal

The proposal stated there would be a round-table discussion on translanguaging and its promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The discussion would revolve around two questions:

- 1. In what circumstances, do you think ESL students' first language should be used in adult ESL/EFL classes?**
- 2. How can translanguaging promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the adult ESL/EFL classes?**

The session would be recorded, so I could later transcribe the participants' responses. This would lead to an article in the AZTESOL Newsletter that would be shared with the membership.

Round-Table Discussion Question 1

There were eight educators who participated in the discussion. They either worked in adult literacy programs, refugee programs, and/or at a community college. One participant began the discussion by noting that the L1 should be used judiciously in order to avoid giving one heritage language group an unfair advantage over another. Another participant stressed how the L1 can be used to introduce new vocabulary in English. She asked students how they would say the new word in their L1; then they examined if there were similarities between the L1 and L2 words. Finally, one participant noted how a word bank could be translated into students' first language.

Building background knowledge was a focal point of the discussion. Participants stressed its importance. They also commented on the situations where the L1 would be used. One participant noted how she shows her students a video clip, and then asks them what is happening. Peers also helped each other build background knowledge and construct English together. Another participant noted how students might not know the concept in L1. The example of the word "astronaut" was given. Since students were unfamiliar with the word, the participant would introduce what the concept meant in students' native language. She would then transfer the idea to English. Finally, another participant noted how students sometimes get confused on how to translate a concept from L1 to L2. The participant solved this by having her students say or write the word in their native language.

MEMBER SUBMISSION: ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION ON TRANSLANGUAGING IN HIGHER AND ADULT ESL EDUCATION

Liza E. Martinez

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Another aspect of building background knowledge mentioned was its intersection with the L1 culture. A participant suggested tying a new concept with something in their culture; for example, in introducing the word, “holiday,” the teacher remarked how Eid is a Muslim holiday. In the process, students were learning the new language and culture while their background knowledge was being acknowledged. Finally, it was noted how common words, such as “love” may vary in meaning depending on the following relationships: man to man, woman to woman, woman to man, and parent to child.

I have found this part of the discussion provided tangible means whereby the L1 is used to facilitate learning the L2. The use of the L1 can be used to scaffold learning everything from new words to concepts students are unfamiliar with. Finally, drawing on students’ cultures has been a way to make meaningful connections. The building of knowledge and constructing English together does not have to restrict itself to a teacher and her students. It can also be done amongst students while they are working in groups.

Round-Table Discussion Question 2

For the second question, the participants agreed that translanguaging does promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the ESL classroom. I found the participants’ responses to question 2 to be insightful. The following comments were made; I think each one speaks for itself.

“The first language is being validated.”

“By sharing languages, we are creating a sense of community.”

“When you use translanguaging, you bring the three themes of the conference. You are putting all of the students in equal ground besides having different educations.”

“Teamwork creates community.”

“We are honoring heritage languages. We are a nation of many countries and value it.”

“We are sharing languages. [It is] very collaborative. We create a sense of community.”

“Native language [use] builds leadership [amongst students].”

“It increases a teacher’s proficiency and changes power relations in the class.”

“Students have something to share. We don’t have all the information. We are learning from them.”



“When you use translanguaging, you bring the three themes of the conference. You are putting all of the students in equal ground besides having different educations.”

MEMBER SUBMISSION: ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION ON TRANSLANGUAGING IN HIGHER AND ADULT ESL EDUCATION

Liza E. Martinez

Arizona Western College

Closing Thoughts

I have found the round-table discussion to be interesting, insightful, and beneficial. It has validated what I have suspected for some time; translanguaging is occurring in adult ESL classrooms here in Arizona. Furthermore, translanguaging serves as an impetus where diversity, equity, and inclusion are promoted and valued. It also leads to a change in power dynamics between teacher and student whereby they are both co-learners. Finally, it encourages leadership to occur amongst students.

More studies on translanguaging in the adult ESL classroom are needed. These can be done in the form of action research. The findings could contribute to the canon about the significant role that students' L1 can play in learning L2.

In closing, I whole-heartedly thank each participant for sharing her thoughts at our round-table. I learned a great deal. I also plan to incorporate the participants' ideas into my future ESL classes.

References

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- Nation, I.S.P. (1990). *Teaching and learning vocabulary*. Newbury House Publishers.



Liza E. Martinez is a full-time ESL instructor at Arizona Western College. She has taught ESL/EFL in Texas, New Mexico, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Africa.

Grants and Awards

Available to AZTESOL Members

In an effort to serve our members in the most fiscally responsible way, the AZTESOL board has approved the allocation of **25% of the organization's annual revenue** to scholarships, grants, and awards for members. This currently totals **\$650**. (Other revenue collected by AZTESOL is applied to upcoming conferences and operational needs.) As a result, AZTESOL is pleased to offer 2 Cheryl Walsh Professional Growth Awards and 2 Classroom Materials Grants. Please see the descriptions below for more information, as some changes from previous years have been made to the awards, and refer to our webpage <https://aztesol.org/develop/grants-awards/> and the application found there for more details.

Cheryl Walsh Professional Growth Award

Applications due December 15

Cheryl Walsh was a dedicated ESL teacher and board member who served as southeast regional representative and organized the first regional conference in Tucson. In her memory, the AZTESOL board offers the Cheryl Walsh Professional Growth Award. The purpose of this award is to assist AZTESOL members in attending the 2022 International TESOL Convention. Two \$200 awards are available this year to assist with registration fees and, if attending in-person, travel, lodging, food, and other costs associated with attending the conference. Application involves submitting an essay of not more than 350 words on why the applicant would like to attend the TESOL convention and how it would positively impact their professional growth. Applicants who are presenting at the conference will be given higher priority. Additionally, one grant will be awarded to one first-time attendee of the 2022 TESOL International Convention (regardless of whether or not they are presenting). Awardees are required to write an article for the AZTESOL Newsletter describing how TESOL participation has contributed to their professional growth.



GRANTS AND AWARDS

Classroom Materials Grant

Open application period

Recognizing the fact that adverse circumstances resulting from the pandemic have disproportionately affected vulnerable and disadvantaged student populations, and that commonly among these are students learning English as an additional language, two grants of \$125 each will be awarded to English language teachers for the purpose of purchasing classroom materials to support their English learners, including those who are learning remotely as a result of the pandemic. Applicants should address the following: (1) Describe how your English learners and their families have been affected by the pandemic; (2) State what the grant will be used to purchase and how it will benefit your English learners; and (3) State if you teach in a high poverty school.



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GRANTS AND AWARDS

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- Member at Large

APPLY NOW

Email Past President Alma Sandigo with attached CV & cover letter.

alma.sandigo@nau.edu