



## **AUHSD helps students with reading disabilities become better readers and the ability to access knowledge and gain skills with ReadSpeaker**

Renee Citlau has taught high school for the Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD) for sixteen years. While participating in Pepperdine's online master's degree program, Renee became inspired by the potential of online education to improve student engagement, increase equity in course offerings, and develop the 21st century skills such as creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication that students need in order to compete in a global economy.

With this in mind, Renee developed the district's first online course six years ago. Since then, the online program has grown to include twelve online teachers in a variety of content areas. She provides ongoing support and training to online teachers in curriculum development, online technology, and online instructional strategies. Renee was named the 2013 National Online Teacher of the Year, an honor presented annually by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) and the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL). Renee has kindly accepted to give us her feedback on text to speech as a resource to help students.

### **About Anaheim Union High School District**

- **Number of Employees:** 3000+
- **Industry:** Secondary Education
- **Year Founded:** 1898
- **Website:** [Visit Website](#)

The Anaheim Union High School District is the premiere school system in the premiere county in the state of California. Founded in 1898, the AUHSD has a student population of approximately 31,000, making it one of the largest school districts in the state. The District covers 46 square miles and stretches across the cities of Anaheim, Cypress, Buena Park, La Palma and Stanton. Our students, who speak 49 different languages in their homes, attend 21 campuses, and come to us from five feeder elementary districts.

## **Exclusive Interview with Renee Citlau from AUHSD**

ReadSpeaker (RS): How long have you been aware of text to speech technology?

Renee Citlau: I became aware of ReadSpeaker last year at a workshop that I attended.

RS: What were the reasons that convinced you that this technology could help you better teach your online business courses?

Renee Citlau: We always look for ways to make our curriculum accessible for all students including English learners, long-term English learners, and students with disabilities. We know that many students struggle with reading and we want to provide support for struggling readers.

RS: Which groups of students in your online classes benefit the most from text to speech?

Renee Citlau: Any student that is a struggling reader will benefit from text to speech. English learner and long-term English learners are particularly helped by text to speech. Many of these students have oral proficiency in English, but they are lacking reading and writing skills. Text to speech helps to provide the scaffolding these students need in order to access the curriculum. In addition, English learners hear the correct pronunciation of the words which helps them in their language acquisition. It takes 5 to 7 years for students to develop academic English. Text to speech is one of the tools we can use so that our English learners can participate in rigorous classes while, at the same time, develop their literacy skills.

RS: What benefits do you see in having content being presented in visual and audio formats at the same time?

Renee Citlau: Students have a choice in reading without the audio or listening to the audio while each word is highlighted.

RS: How does the highlighting of the text as it is being read benefit your students?

Renee Citlau: Students hear and read along with each word which helps to reinforce language acquisition and their learning.

RS: Do you see ReadSpeaker as a tool that benefits students with reading disabilities?

Renee Citlau: ReadSpeaker is a tool that helps students with reading disabilities become better readers and the ability to access knowledge and gain skills that were previously closed because of their reading disability.

Contact the ReadSpeaker team today to discuss how our education products can enhance your students' learning experience and learn more at [www.readspeaker.com/education](http://www.readspeaker.com/education)

ReadSpeaker is a global voice specialist providing dozens of languages and lifelike voices. Using its own industry-leading technology, the company delivers some of the most natural-sounding synthesized voices on the market. ReadSpeaker uses next-generation Deep Neural Network (DNN) technology to structurally improve voice quality at all levels.

ReadSpeaker is a subsidiary of the Memory Disk Division (MD) of the HOYA Corporation, with offices in 15 countries, and over 10,000 customers in 65 countries, providing a complete text-to-speech (TTS) offering, both as Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) and as licensed solutions. A fully integrated TTS provider, ReadSpeaker encompasses all of HOYA's state-of-the-art technologies (NeoSpeech, Voiceware, VoiceText and rSpeak), providing a wide variety of applications for varying channels and devices in multiple industries. ReadSpeaker gives a voice to businesses and organizations for online, embedded, server or desktop needs, apps, speech production, custom voices and more. With more than 20 years' experience, the ReadSpeaker team of experts is leading the way in text to speech. ReadSpeaker is "Pioneering Voice Technology".

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