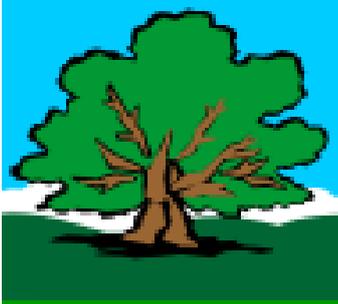


Issue 64
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2012



FOR ENGLISH TEACHING PROFESSIONALS IN FRANCE

Teaching Times

TESOL

FRANCE

Allez T F Bordeaux!



Groaning under the weight of the newly printed 2012 Printemps issue of the *Teaching Times*, I am impressed by the variety and quality of items we have to offer you this time around. No less than 36 pages full to overflowing with interviews, activities and articles to entertain, amuse and delight!

TESOL France President, Bethany Cagnol, kicks off by outlining a brand new

initiative that is sure to have a very positive bearing on *your* professional development. Gillian Evans reports on a talk by IATEFL patron, Professor David Crystal, entitled *Plurilingualism, Pluridialectism, Pluriformity* that seeks to test our understanding on a variety of different levels. First-time presenters would do well to heed the words of Mike Hogan in his recent tête-à-tête with Bethany, while on page 15, Nick Robinson gives us a few tips on how to better promote our 'ELT selves'.

Something you'll notice about this issue is that aside from our regular feature writers and reviewers, there are a growing number of TESOL France members submitting articles for print. Csilla Jaray-Benn and Christina Rebuffet-

Boardus, both of Grenoble, Hal D'Arpini in Strasbourg, as well as Fiona MacKenzie, Fiona Robertson and Divya Brochier from Paris all agreed to write for this issue. Indeed, we hope to hear more from them in the future. Its interesting to note that proportionally speaking, we have more TESOL France members actively contributing to our magazine than ever before. If this inspires you – and I sincerely hope it does – then please don't hesitate to contact me at the following address, editor@tesol-france.org so that we can discuss YOUR contribution in more detail!!

Welcome aboard to
TESOL France Bordeaux,
New Regional Branch in
South West France



We've moved.

In This Issue ...

- *Two new ExCom members say Hi!*
- **Evaluating the difficulties of teaching English to a French audience**
- *Nick Michelioudakis puts aside his halo and talks Social Psychology*
- **Eric's got Post-It Fever. But watch out 'cos its contagious!**
- *Engineering a pen-pal challenge in Chile*
- **Airspeaking Fiona Robertson talks us through the ICAEA**

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Web: www.tesol-france.org
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Postcard From The President

Earlier this year, I wrote about how TESOL France would be making some very big steps this year.

TESOL France is making a big step by holding this year's Spring Day in Strasbourg. This is just part of our long-term plan to reach teachers who may not have the funds or the institutional sponsorship to travel to our events in Paris. In fact, other European teacher associations have been doing this for years. IATEFL Poland and TESOL Spain, for example, run very successful annual conferences in a different city every year and welcome over 600 delegates each time! While that is still far off in the future for us, we're still excited to not only have the resources but also such an enthusiastic team to organize the Spring Day in Strasbourg.

"We're making a big step towards expanding YOUR professional development"

We are also making a big step towards expanding your professional development. Late September, we will be holding a membership drive in partnership with Pilgrims who will be offering invaluable advice on how to apply for training and international grants.

And for the first time ever, TESOL France will be hosting an 'Expert in Residency' program before our Annual Colloquium in November. We will be flying plenary speaker, Tom Farrell, in from Canada a week before the conference so that he can offer reflective practice seminars to our institutional members free of charge! This will be one of our biggest professional development initiatives yet and we are really looking forward to it.

As always, these big steps wouldn't be possible without the dedication of the TESOL France Executive



Committee. We are in the process of recruiting new team members, so please do let us know if you are interested in helping out or taking on a specific role. And in the meantime, flip through the pages of this *Teaching Times* issue to see we already have much to be proud of this year!

~ **Bethany Cagnol**
President 2010-2012

Special Message of Condolences

*TESOL France was very saddened to hear the news of the passing of one of our newest, but most enthusiastic members, **Michael Hinds**.*

He was a frequent attendee of our events in 2011 and always offered valuable ideas and input in business English training.

We would like to offer our heartfelt condolences to Michael's family and friends.

*This issue of the **Teaching Times** is dedicated to his memory.*



Michael (third from right) with colleagues following a recent TESOL France workshop in Paris

This is your ... *Executive Committee*

TESOL France introduces our 'new kid on the block', **Federico Espinosa**, who just recently set up our newest Regional Branch. Read on to find out where and how.



Federico is an American with a B.A. in Chemistry from Reed College. He started his career in 2008

working as a chemistry and physics teacher with the U.S. Peace Corps in Guinea, West Africa. The administrators at his rural *collège* convinced him to teach English as well, and he quickly realized how much more fun and interactive it was to teach languages.

Post-Peace Corps life brought Federico to France as an assistant in Besançon, then as a *lecteur* in Bordeaux.

In February 2012 he set up TESOL France Bordeaux, and has big plans for this new Regional Branch. Personally he plans on pursuing an M.A. in TESOL to continue growing professionally within the French higher education system.

*As our Regional Branches go from strength to strength, Grenoble remains steadfast. As of April 2012 the branch is officially 'under new management'. Meet **Christina Rebuffet-Boardus**.*

Christina has been living in France for eight years and teaching just as long. She works as a freelance teacher in companies and at the various universities in Grenoble and also writes for several language-learning magazines.

She's paradoxically interested in dogme, or unplugged teaching, and in using technology to build learner autonomy. She believes that the 21st



century has given us a host of valuable tech tools that are indispensable for a modern teacher and that by showing students the fun of embracing them outside the classroom, teachers and students can get to the heart of communicating in English in class. She also likes to think she's creative and encourages students to use their imaginations!

She blogs about teaching ideas, experiments in ELT, and more at <http://ilovetefl.com>.

Calling All English Teaching Professionals



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 3 copies a year of the 'Teaching Times'

Not forgetting the chance to meet & network with some of the most dynamic, motivated ELT professionals in France & beyond!

To join TESOL France: go to www.tesol-france.org/membership.php

Francis Castillo, *United Language Consultants*

It doesn't take long for any new English teacher in the Strasbourg area to get to know Francis Castillo, whether through his reputation as a teacher and entrepreneur, his insightful comments at TESOL workshops, or simply because he took the time to introduce himself. Hal D'Arpini was himself a new teacher in Strasbourg last fall when he first met Francis and happily agreed to interview him.

Francis, you've been here in Strasbourg for quite awhile. When did you start teaching here?

About 12 years ago. Teaching English was the most natural and logical thing to do when I came to France since I had already been teaching it for almost eight years at that time.

Where specifically have you taught English?

Well, different places. I've worked with a lot of companies here in the region of Alsace. All kinds of businesses: from pharmaceutical companies to office furniture designers.

When did you first know that you wanted to teach English as a second language?

I was 18 years of age when I started teaching English. My mother had opened a private school in the Dominican Republic some years before that, and she gave me the opportunity to work with her then.

The first time we met, you gave me your business card but we didn't have a chance to discuss your business in detail. Tell me something about your company and the services it offers.

More than just a company, it is a concept that I created when I first came up with United Language Consultants. I believe in the recognition of the work we English teachers provide. I believe in the importance of our role as facilitators to different companies, not only here in Alsace, but also in the

rest of France, in their everyday communication with co-workers, counterparts, customers or suppliers. So, I believe the service we provide as a company resides in the continuing improvement of the very much needed communication our customers strive to achieve.

How do you see the current ESL market trends in Strasbourg and the rest of Alsace, both in terms of the demand for English courses and the supply of qualified teachers to provide them?

Alsace, due to its geographical position, embodies the perfect playground for us to do quite a remarkable job. The ongoing expansion of different companies towards other markets brings us the opportunity to have a quite lucrative activity for many years to come. English is needed more and more every day in Alsace, a region known in the past for its predomi-

"Alsace, due to its geographical position, embodies the perfect playground for us to do quite a remarkable job."

nance of German. Several large companies have even elevated English to the position of 'the language of the group'. The problem with that increasing need is the quality of the service that is provided. Qualified and/or experienced English teachers are nowadays as easy to find as a needle in a haystack. I mean, think about it, many professions in France are protected by a minimum requirement of training. Not English teachers! This is appalling! That means that any English native speaker backpacking around Europe could have our job in a blink of an eye, just due to the fact that unscrupulous language schools just go for the first bidder. Initiatives, such as reviving the CELTA/DELTA, bring a different twist to the profession, creating a standard and a level in our profession.

After being part of the teaching profession here for several years, how have you seen working condi-

tions for teachers evolve or devolve, as the case may be?

As I stated before, working conditions are not so good in general. But I say, we English teachers are to blame for this. We often settle for the lowest pay, we never question our employers. Most of us know how much these language schools charge their customers and how much we are paid, but do nothing in the end. So, it is time we take matters into our own hands. Nobody is going to do that for us!

For new teachers such as me, what advice -- or warnings -- would you offer in terms of getting a foothold in the marketplace?

Your reputation precedes you! This is built after a long-lasting relationship of trust with the market, which is especially true here in Alsace. Aim for quality and never cease to question yourself in this business. This will make you humble and will forever teach you a great lesson I'm still learning myself: 'Others may always surprise you'. Never sell yourself short, even if you don't know how you're going to pay your rent at the end of the month. Value your skills and never underestimate yourself. *The respect thou givest thyself and others will be returned a thousand fold.*

~ Hal d'Arpini
TESOL France Member



Francis Castillo

An Interview with ... Mike Hogan

So, Mike, you're about to do a talk via Skype for our Spring Day in Strasbourg. What are your impressions of TESOL France?

I think TESOL France is a great, incredibly well-organised and very active organisation. I really enjoyed and benefited from attending the Annual Colloquium last November and am looking forward to presenting at Spring Day in April. There's a lot going on in the TESOL France Facebook group, too.

What do you remember from the first time you spoke at a conference?

It was at the BESIG Annual Conference in Berlin in 2007. I was presenting research I had carried out as part of my Trinity Diploma on what motivates business English (in-company) learners. The audience of 70 was about twice what I had been expecting, which confirmed the relevance of my topic and made me feel I was on the right track. I was quite nervous, although having some familiar faces in the audience definitely helped. All-in-all, it went very well and I was happy to be able to share my experience and research with my peers.

Some teachers are reluctant to speak in front of their colleagues. What would you suggest they do to get over nervousness?

They could start small by presenting some teaching ideas or resources locally on a regular basis for 15 minutes or so and build up confidence and experience from there. You could organise something in your staffroom on Fridays for example. Actually, I think TESOL France run such events throughout the country.

Yes, we do. But running workshops in one's staffroom is also a good idea. What would you say are the benefits to giving talks at conferences?

It's a great opportunity to share with the teaching community. Everyone has great ideas and experience and it's a shame when it stays hidden away. It's also a good way to take your career to the next level. Publishers who see you talk might be interested in helping you share your ideas on a greater level by publishing them.

Interesting. You've given talks in front of an audience and online. What would you say are the major differences? I assume the same differences apply to communicating to English language trainees online, right?

In a face-to-face session, if you've got 5 or 25 in your group the dynamics are going

to be different. It's the same online. With large online groups you can best interact by using polls and asking questions to which the participants can reply in the chat field or you can 'hand over' the mic. With small groups you can all have your webcams and headsets already active and have more of a communicative session. The biggest differences, of course, are in the turn-taking dynamic (due to slight time delays online) and the ability to read and react to body language. Both of these aspects of communication play a large role when face to face.

But the conferences you go to cost money, right? You have to pay for them (travel, registration fee, etc). Do you cover the costs or are you sponsored?

Sometimes I'm sponsored by a publisher or the school I work for and sometimes I pay for myself. It's important to regularly invest in yourself and your professional development. We encourage life long learning in our learners and should also practice it ourselves.

Based on your experience in Germany, do you think language training is headed down a path of being 100% distance mode?

Definitely not. Learning in our context won't go 100% distance, but we can't ignore benefits offered by taking some of the learning outside of the classroom. Blended learning has definitely made a comeback and the flipped classroom is a great example of learning happening outside of the classroom so more active practice and language usage can happen in the classroom.

Do you find a lot of teachers in Germany invest in going to conferences? Is professional development seen as a priority?

Well, it's definitely recognised as a need, but teachers also need to balance family and private lives as well as continuing to generate income. It's great that there are teacher's organisations in most German cities that meet regularly - maybe once a month. They're independent of each other but do coordinate getting specific speakers to go on a tour around the country, thus maximizing the cost-benefit ratio of bringing that speaker to Germany. Conferences are seen as a great place to network, exchange ideas and experience with peers and stay up to date on the latest developments and publications in the industry. Professional development is not only about continual development of you and

your skills as a professional; it's also about maintaining a high level of employability.

How else would you recommend teachers work further towards their own professionalization?

Well, as I said before, continued professional development can make you more employable. You also need a CV that demonstrates this and not one that shows you stopped learning as soon as you started teaching. You also need to think about the image you portray to current and potential employers or clients. And you need to see yourself as a revenue generating business. This means it is your responsibility to go out and find work and not sit back and hope it will fall in your lap. You need to have a business and financial plan and be willing to invest in both marketing and training for yourself.

Anything in the works you can talk about?

Well, I've recently become an accredited consultant to use an international profiling tool, so I'm hoping to work with more individuals who need to lead at an international level. I'm also very happy to be writing teaching activities for Business Spotlight International which will be available online as of April and I've got a Business English course book (*Basis for Business B2*, Cornelsen), the fourth in the series, coming out in August in Germany.

Thanks again for taking the time to answer my questions, Mike. We want to remind our readers that they can check out a recording of your Colloquium talk on the TESOL France website.

Yes, that's the recording of a talk I gave on teaching online using virtual meeting software at last year's conference. I really enjoyed it. Thanks again for the recent opportunities to speak at TESOL France events and for this interview.

~ *Bethany Cagnol*
President



Mike is based in Hamburg and has 10 years experience in business communication and intercultural skills training. His professional development and hobbies are conveniently combined in

his role as IATEFL and BESIG conference photographer and reporter.

<http://about.me/mikehogan>



IATEFL BESIG Summer Symposium 2012

Teaching Professional English

in cooperation with TESOL France

16 June, Télécom ParisTech, Paris, France

Plenary by David Crystal

Language and the Internet



What influence is the Internet having on language, and what is happening to language as it comes to be used on the Internet? There is a great deal of misleading popular mythology, which needs to be replaced by precise linguistic description. The talk presents the view that the Internet is in some respects a linguistic revolution, introducing new opportunities for communication, but that its influence on individual languages has so far been quite limited

Professor David Crystal is one of the world's foremost authorities on language. An internationally renowned writer, editor, lecturer, and broadcaster, he received an OBE in 1995 for his services to the



English language. He has authored and edited over 100 books, including The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language, The Stories of English, and Language and the Internet. Internet Linguistics: A Student Guide and The Story of English in 100 Words were published in 2011.

You can visit David's website here: www.davidcrystal.com

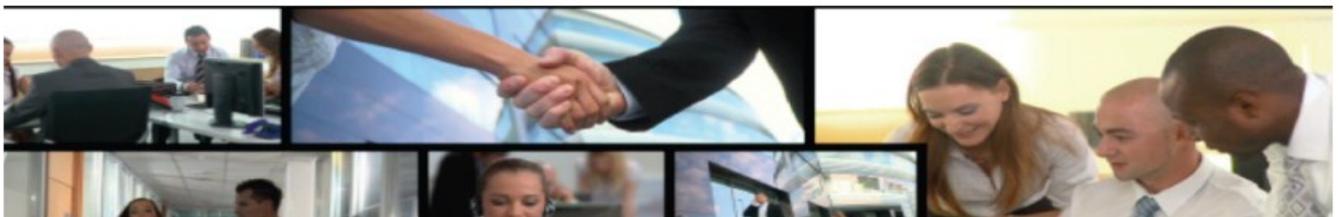
Important dates

Early bird registration begins: 15 March 2012

Normal registration: 16 April - 25 May 2012

BESIG, the Business English Special Interest Group of IATEFL

www.besig.org



Teaching in France: Why is it so difficult?

Csilla Jaray-Benn seeks to provide a touch of logic to some of our more commonly held beliefs of the French as learners of English.

Phonetic Gap

Several years ago I accompanied a child with hearing difficulties to the University Hospital in Grenoble, where I learned the eye-, or rather ear-opening fact that ‘the French are deaf to languages’. The general belief that ‘*Nous, les français sommes nuls en langues*’ was suddenly framed in an obvious predetermined destiny. Proven by physicists, physicians and linguists, the French are physiologically challenged when they embark on the adventure of learning a foreign language and in particular, when the language happens to be English. Francophone speakers’ hearing is tuned to a very low and limited frequency range compared to other Indo-European languages (see Fig 1). The French hearing span is squeezed between 1,000 and 2,000 Hz, while Anglophone ears are able to hear sounds from 2,000 Hz (1,500 Hz for US English) up to 8,000 Hz. What makes things even worse is the ‘hearing gap’ between the two phonetic systems; basically where Anglophones start, the French stop hearing.

They need to realize that their goal is to retain some relevant information.

Encouragement and positive feedback are crucial to boosting their feeling of success. When a low level learner picks up a few words from a live radio show or podcast, he/she has to experience it as a personal learning success.

As for pronunciation, I always attempt to downplay the need to be perfect and rather make learners feel comfortable with the way they speak. Empowering them with recording their voice and self-correction has a very positive effect on their performance. Guiding French learners to become more focused listeners and more relaxed speakers, will allow them to boost their self-esteem as a foreign language user and to construct their ‘L2 self’, a term



Idea adapted from James E. Zull, LATEFL Conference, 2012

elaborate morphology while English is generated by rules of syntax and shows no major difficulties in its morphology.

Therefore, one would think that English should be ‘easy’ since it lacks everything that makes French difficult. However, my experiences show quite the opposite. For a French learner, details of conjugation, gender and accordance are often regarded as safe guidelines from their perspective. Leaving the security of this realm of rules, they become confused. As an example, one of my adult students admitted to me that the only way he was able to memorize English ‘conjugation’ in the present tense was to see it written as a table; a table which would remind him of the *Bescherelle* grammar book of his school days. Even if this table showed no difference in the verb forms, apart from the 3rd person singular ‘s’, it reassured him that he was not making mistakes.

The same logic applies with the use of simple past forms. The French call it *prétérit*, probably just to avoid confusion between the *passé simple* and the past simple, used differently in the two languages. The past simple tense, for some reason, seems to be not simple at all for French learners. They prefer using the present perfect for past actions. The reasoning for this is that the latter form corresponds more to the French *passé composé* (have + past participle) and their automatism is biased towards this composed verb tense. This may appear as a learner making things more complicated than necessary, but in fact their difficulty in mastering a simple language phenomenon is conditioned by their mother tongue. Drawing on the French learners’ analytical skills and their love for their own language by explaining the reasons for their difficulties, will help them overcome their incomprehension of ‘why is it so difficult?’ and lead to a more positive attitude towards learning.

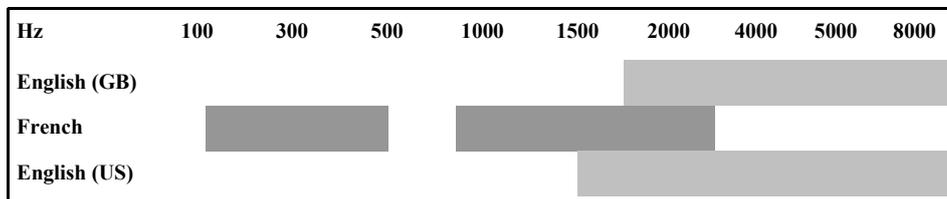


Fig 1: Comparison of Sound Frequency (excerpt), adapted from www.tomatis-toulouse.com

Not hearing the difference between ‘eat’ and ‘heat’, ‘he’ and ‘she’, the diphthongs in ‘house’, ‘mouse’ and ‘brown’ are conditioned by the above mentioned physiological facts and result in a hopeless sigh of ‘*je n’ai rien compris*’ when listening to English.

To lessen language anxiety triggered by this physiological reality, I aim to reassure my learners with special emphasis on *how* to listen. Methods that work: audio-skimming and scanning; pre-listening visual supports, giving them full control over the audio playing device; letting them listen as many times as they wish. Most importantly however, before exposing them to the unarticulated noise they might hear from a BBC radio show, it is crucial to help them accept the fact that they will most probably not understand everything.

introduced by Zoltán Dörnyei (2009).

Discourse Divide

It is commonly observed that French learners will not open their mouths in English because they are anxious about making a mistake. This perfectionism is deeply rooted in their Cartesian culture, conditioned by long years in an education system showing very little tolerance for errors, and is also due to difficulties in learning their mother tongue as far as its grammar and spelling are concerned. French schoolchildren struggle for over six years with conjugation, genders, accordance, plurals, a long list of so-called ‘grammatical homophones’; in brief, with morphological aspects of the language. Overall, French is primarily based on an

“To lessen language anxiety ... it is crucial to help them [students] accept the fact they will most probably not understand everything.”

The other facet of this interference between French and English is the challenge of understanding and producing English on a syntax level. How many times have I heard from my learners that despite the fact that they understand the meaning of each word, the sequence of words in a

Teaching in France, contin.

sentence makes no sense. Not having the guiding force of the separate morphemes, they are not tuned to see the meaning generated by word order. Even advanced level learners tend to get lost in the maze of English word order to such an extent that their randomly sequenced utterances become incomprehensible. Not being understood despite their efforts just adds to the disbelief in their L2 aptitudes.

We must keep in mind that the French set high standards towards language performance in general, therefore towards practising a foreign language as well, so the best way to improve their confidence in English is by building their own self-confidence as *correct* language users.

Motivational Deficit

The mainstream belief underlying the phrase of *'je suis nul en langues'* can be explained by differences in sound pitch, language structure, and by numerous other dissimilarities, but in the end, we must agree with Zoltán Dörnyei's statement that *'in the vast majority of cases learners with sufficient motivation can achieve a working knowledge of an L2, regardless of their language aptitude or other cognitive characteristics'* (2001:5). Building a teaching method with specific weak points in mind and raising learner's awareness of the need for effort in order to succeed, will help avoid the generalisation that Sarah Mercer defines as a *'fixed language learning mindset'*. As Mercer explains, people with a *'fixed mindset'* believe that *'if you don't have the "gift" for languages, then it is hopeless to try and make any real efforts to improve'*. (2012) Another data point arising from the Eurobarometer survey proves the relevance of this idea in the French case. Second place with 43% after Portugal's 50%, the French are considered *'not willing to devote any time to language learning'* (Eurobarometer 2009). Their negative beliefs in regard to their language aptitudes generate anxiety, fear of failure, unwillingness to take risks involved in language learning and they wish for an *'effortless'* and *'painless'* language learning experience. From a motivational point of view, Dörnyei's suggestion seems to be particularly relevant in the instance of the French learners. Dörnyei considers that *'we ought to play down the importance of ability'* and as he further develops the idea, *'Highlighting the role of effort, on the other hand, is safe: it facilitates future achievement'* (2001:120).

Identifying and raising awareness of the concrete linguistic reasons underlying the

difficulties that French learners have in learning English is very much in line with the French way of thinking, being driven by reasoning. A gap-bridging approach will help downplay the importance of ability and will lead to small personal learning successes. We all know that success generates success and as Dörnyei puts it *'If we can make students believe that higher level of effort in general offers a possibility for success, they will persist in spite of the inevitable failures that accompany learning'* (2001:120).

~ Csilla Jaray-Benn
TESOL France member

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With two MA degrees in English and French Language and Literature as well as a DEA in Theatre Arts, Csilla teaches

Communication Skills at IEA Grenoble, Business English and English for Teenagers. She also owns Business English Services, www.bes-grenoble.com and can be contacted at: csilla.benn@bes-grenoble.com

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Plurilingualism, Pluridialectism, Pluriformity

In his usual inimitable style, David Crystal addressed the theme of the recent TESOL Spain Annual Convention in Bilbao (9-11 March), 'Plurilingualism: promoting co-operation between communities, people and nations'. In attendance was Gillian Evans who offers us an abridged version of David's talk.

Naturally we want to promote co-operation between communities, people and nations. The crucial question is How? Cooperation presupposes understanding, and the problem with the word 'understanding' is that it is not a simple word to understand, because it has several levels of interpretation. The basic level is semantic: if I

"... the problem with the word 'understanding' is that it is not a simple word to understand, ..."

say 'I understand English', it means I understand the meaning of the words and sentences. But if someone says, in an argument 'Yes, I understand what you're saying', this is no longer a semantic observation. It means that although they have understood the semantic there are some pragmatic problems about acting on it. For example, in a financial negotiation, if an offer is made by Mr A to Mr B, to which Mr B replies with 'I understand what you're saying', then Mr A will deduce that Mr B is not happy about the offer.

In addition, there is also a social or cultural layer, as when a man says 'I shall never understand women' or a Brit says 'I just don't understand Americans'. Now we are talking about some general concept of behaviour or belief. And the chief problem facing us all, to my mind, when we address the question of how to promote co-operation between communities, peoples and nations, is the gap that exists between semantic and cultural understanding. We can teach our students to understand the words and expressions, but have we taught their cultural significance?

The problem exists both within a language and between languages. The encounter with the English of a community other than your own does not automatically mean understanding: rather, it shows us just how much we do *not* understand.

If cooperation requires understanding, and understanding requires awareness of cultural difference, then we need to place our linguistic analyses, and our language teaching systematically within a cultural

frame of reference. It needs to be part of an applied sociolinguistics. The more specialized the interaction – in classrooms, boardrooms, clinics, and labs – the less likely local cultural differences will interfere. It is outside these settings where the problems are most likely to be encountered. This to my mind is the biggest challenge that those who study English as a *lingua franca* need to anticipate.

Just how much of the lexicon of a language is culturally specific in this way?

How many words, idioms and expressions have a cultural baggage which means that, in everyday conversation, they are likely to mislead or be misunderstood? We can get a quick sense of the scale of the issue by reflecting on the wide range of vocabulary involved, such as the names of indigenous plants or animals, home-produced food and drink, local customs and practices, traditional myths and legends, contemporary politics and religion, popular sports and games.

Here are some examples of the kind of thing a speaker steeped in the culture behind British English might say, without thinking twice about it. Consider the cultural background you would have to explain to a student in order to make sense of the following snatches of a conversation:

- *The job isn't all beer and skittles, you know*
- (after a bad pun) *You're not a writer of Xmas crackers, by any chance?*
- *It was like Clapham Junction in Oxford Street today*

In each case, we are dealing with an utterance where learners understand the pronunciation, the orthography, the individual words, and the sentence construction - but still do not understand what is meant. The cultural history needs to be explained. Once it is, everything falls into place. It isn't rocket science. The explanations are usually quite simple. But without them, one is at a loss. Only a few cultural phenomena transcend cultural barriers - football comes to mind, as does Shakespeare.

Most of the words in a bilingual dictionary seem to translate cultural allusions with reasonable equivalence. My question is:

What proportion of words don't? The figure varies greatly, depending on the cultural distance between the languages being compared. But once we leave core vocabulary behind, the figure becomes much higher.

Other factors are involved. The percentage will also depend on just how much encyclopedic lexicon is brought into the equation – such as names of personalities, place-names, titles of publications and television programmes, and brand names. If we take a narrowly linguistic conception of semantics, excluding proper nouns on the grounds that they tell us nothing about a language's semantic system (as British dictionaries traditionally do), then our figures for culturally distinctive lexicon will be relatively low. But if we broaden this conception to allow in encyclopedic items (as American dictionaries do) the figure shoots up dramatically. And the figure will rise still further when we take into account the fact that the word is not the only semantic unit to express cultural vision.

"New Englishes: distinctiveness is primarily signalled through a local lexicon, much of which is culturally conditioned by the languages of the community where English is being used."

Metaphors and similes often make allusions which are culturally specific: *batten down the hatches, having a card up your sleeve, as flat as a pancake, as mad as a march hare, as nutty as a fruitcake*. Quotations, slogans, humour... as we say of all of these, and especially the last, 'they don't travel'.

But whether the figure is 5 or 50 percent, the learner has a problem, as several of the salient items will be of relatively high frequency of occurrence in a language. And, as far as the English language is concerned, the problem is increasing, because the spread of English as a global language has led to the emergence of the 'new Englishes', whose distinctiveness is primarily signaled through a local lexicon, much of which is culturally conditioned by the languages of the community where English is being used. At an international conference, people with all kinds of linguistic backgrounds will be talking to each other through the medium of English. When the talk is professional and formal, cultural problems will be minimal. But when the talk turns to everyday matters and becomes informal, it is not long before cultural differences intrude.

The irony is that the misunderstandings

Plurilingualism, contin.

often go unnoticed or are ignored because the subject-matter is trivial.

Only occasionally do they lead to a real breakdown in communication. It can take people a while to even realize that there is a problem. They too readily assume that foreigners will know what they are talking about. They take things for granted.

As English becomes a local alternative language, these differences increase. Every English-speaking location in the world has usages like this: place-names which connote leisure or good food or high-quality standards.

'My watch is more Portobello Road than Bond Street'. Should you be impressed? 'John lives in Park Lane.'

Should you be impressed? What are the equivalents of such place-names in other English-speaking countries? From this point of view, notions such as 'Spanish English' and 'Basque English' take on a fresh relevance, going well beyond traditional conceptions of English spoken with a Spanish or Basque accent, or English displaying interference from Spanish or Basque grammar.

So how can a teacher help? The first step, I think, is to draw attention to the parallel between the different kinds of encounter with linguistic diversity that I have been referring to in this talk. Diversity, it should now be clear, does not mean only plurilingualism. It also means pluridialectalism, where 'dialect' means not only regional dialect, but also social dialect and occupational dialect.

How do we bridge the gap between an ELT vision of the world and plurilingual vision? My answer is to focus on the similarities between the issue of cultural understanding that we encounter when we are teaching and learning varieties of English, and the same issue that we encounter when we are teaching and learning other languages. We need a term that transcends language, dialect, and variety, which draws attention to the relationships between them, and for today I propose to use pluriformity.

Let me conclude by illustrating the way pluriformity manifests itself in these various areas – first, in relation to mother-tongue teaching and learning. Making students aware of variety differences is a major goal of mother-tongue education.

Teenagers are often stereotyped and criticized for an apparent inability to switch varieties. There is, in adult life, a division between the formal and the personal. 'Yo', 'Hey', or 'How ya doin'? will make a less favourable impression than a grey, dutiful, 'How do you do?'

A great deal of school time these days is devoted to developing students' sense of style and appropriateness in language use. It is not a question of replacing the street style by the professional style but of developing an appreciation

of the value of both, and of the restrictions governing their use. In this respect, the mother-tongue student is no different from the second-language learner. All of us, as teachers, sense the importance of

appropriateness when we focus on such issues as informal vs. formal English, literary English, business English, and all the topics that go under the heading of English for special purposes.

These are examples of linguistic diversity affecting understanding with a single regional variety of language – in my case, British English. This kind of issue also goes well beyond the distinction between British and American English. Even monolinguals practice a kind of code-switching, without realising it, when they unconsciously introduce a foreign expression into their speech in English. We regularly hear people talking about a *tour de force* or a *pièce de résistance* or – to go Spanish – saying *pronto*, *manana*, or *olé*. Some speakers make a habit of it.

The perspectives I have been outlining illustrate a progression from monolingualism to plurilingualism – from international varieties of English to international varieties and then to varieties influenced by contact with other languages – and in each case we need to acknowledge the relevance of a cultural frame of reference. I am suggesting that the cultural linguistic issues involved when we approach ELT from a plurilingual perspective are the same as those we experience when we approach it from a bilingual or monolingual perspective. Linguistic variation is one of the driving principles of our faculté de langage, or language organ. What we need to do is turn this theoretical position into practice.

The corpus approach, so beloved of contemporary English language applied lin-

guists, will be of little help here. Rather more useful will be the production of regional cultural dictionaries or glossaries. It is the kind of thing that has already been attempted. The exercise now needs to be repeated and extended to include all English-speaking areas. A group of people get together from a community and, in a brainstorming way, identify the features of their language that seem to reflect the kind of cultural preoccupations I have been discussing.

The task goes well beyond what is practicable in a traditional dictionary format. The end product looks more like an encyclopedia than a dictionary, for it is dealing with explanations as well as descriptions. Only an online site would be able to cope with the scale of the enterprise. So this is my proposal: that somehow, somewhere, someone creates a website identifying the cultural linguistic practices of the English-speaking world, to which groups from different countries would make contributions, and where a forum facility would allow the kind of intercultural commentary which is essential. If I were 30 years younger I would do it myself, for I believe it could be one of the most practicable ways of promoting co-operation between communities, people and nations. But, in the absence of a youth-enhancing drug, I hope others will take up the challenge.

~ Gillian Evans

TESOL France General Secretary

(by kind permission of Prof David Crystal)

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Next Paris
engagement
16 June 2012
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(see page 8)



Social Psychology and ELT—The ‘Halo Effect’

Nick Michelioudakis considers how trainers might work on developing their aura in an attempt to improve their professional prospects. Read on ...

How important is one’s handwriting? Hardly at all you might say, especially today when most people use a computer. Yet research shows otherwise. In a revealing experiment, a number of exam scripts were copied twice – once in good handwriting and once in bad handwriting. They were then passed on to two groups of examiners who were told to mark them and were specifically instructed to mark for content. Amazingly, the neatly-written scripts got significantly higher marks than the others (Sutherland 1992). Why did such a thing happen? The answer is that very often when we have to assess someone (or something) and this person has a salient, positive feature, the latter colours our judgment, so we tend to make all kind of positive attributions about this person, judgments which are at best only marginally related to the quality which stands out. This is called the ‘Halo Effect’.

An experiment:

One would expect the scientific world to be less susceptible to such an effect. Not so. In 1982, two psychologists decided to try out an interesting experiment. They selected 12 well-known journals of psychology and to each one they sent an article to be considered for publication. These articles are routinely checked by two authorities on the particular field as well as the editor. The results: in 8 out of the 12 cases the articles were deemed unworthy of publication. Out

of 16 ‘evaluators’ and 8 editors who (presumably) read them, not a single one had a different view. Well, one might say, not all articles submitted are up to par. This is true, only in this case these particular articles had been published by the very same journals, under the same title only a few months previously!! The only thing the two psychologists had changed were the names of the authors (eminent university professors) to

“The Halo Effect: when a person has a salient, positive feature that colours our judgement so we tend to make all kinds of positive attributions about this person ...”

imaginary ones and their affiliations (originally such prestigious universities as Harvard or Princeton) to non-existent (and by definition obscure) ones! Well, you might think, at least 4 of the articles were thought to be good. Not quite. In 3 out of the 4 cases someone simply realised that they had published this material before... (Sutherland 1992)

Why did such a thing happen? The answer is probably that journals like the

above are probably inundated by submissions from academics on the make who are anxious to add yet another entry to their CV. It is equally likely that many of these articles are run-of-the-mill, with little to recommend them. This being so, it makes sense for the ‘evaluators’ to resort to ‘shortcuts’ (Cialdini 2001) – rather than scrutinize each script, they look at the name of the writer first. If s/he is a famous professor from an Ivy-League University, then the article is more likely to be worthy of publication. But if we start thinking like this, then an amazing change happens: as Sutherland (1992) points out, when faced with a piece of work by an established writer, we tend to look for its positive aspects, while if the writer’s name rings no bells then we start looking for flaws!

Still not convinced? Here is another example. In the mid-70s, someone

sent a book to no less than 27 different publishers and literary agents. No marks for guessing what happened. All 27 rejected it. Yet this book (*Steps* by Kosinsky) had actually been published in 1969 and had won the American National Book Award! All that had been changed was the title and the name of the writer. What is more remarkable is that one of the publishers who rejected the ‘new book’ was Random House – the same publisher that had published the original!! (ibid.)

Lest you should think that this phenomenon is restricted to the world of books and publishing, here are some more examples to show you just how widespread it is: Good-looking people are universally thought to be friendlier, more intelligent and more humorous, tall people are thought to have all kinds of leadership qualities, they are clearly favoured in job inter-

“.. Create an ‘aura’ of the competent/charismatic/special teacher [...] to win the hearts and minds of our students.”

views and make more money than people like me who are slightly challenged in the vertical

dimension, and, of course, men of a high social status are judged as more attractive by women...(Brehm, Kassir & Fein 2002).

Applications in the field of teaching: If we can create for ourselves this ‘aura’ of the competent/charismatic/special teacher, then we are halfway towards winning the battle for the ‘hearts and minds’ of our students. Here are some ideas:

Friendliness: When I ask my students to describe the best teacher they know, they almost invariably mention someone possessing this quality. When I try to probe deeper to see what it is about their method that is so special, my students are often stumped. It is because attitude is such a salient feature that it colours the students’ perception of the teacher both as an individual *and* as a professional (for research see Albersson, Frey & Gregg 2004, p. 8)



The Halo Effect, contin.



First impressions: Teachers often 'save' their best techniques for later – a big mistake in my view. By using your favourite materials/techniques early on, you create a positive impression in the students' minds which will pre-dispose them favourably towards all your subsequent lessons. The tendency of first impressions to 'stick' has been demonstrated again and again (Fine 2005).

Professionalism: Little details like being prepared, giving an outline of your lesson in advance, revising what you did the previous time, showing students that there is a continuity in your sessions – all these create an impression of 'professionalism' and they are more observable than, say, a profound activity sequence (Lewis & Hill 1992). The point is that once you have acquired a reputation as a 'true professional', this reputation precedes you and everything you do will then be seen in this light!

Success: Unfortunately perhaps, teachers too are judged by results. This is particularly true in the case of 1-to-1 lessons. Consequently, there is a lot to be said for 'blowing your own trumpet'. This will create an expectation of success which boosts the students' confidence and acts like a self-fulfilling prophecy (Dornyei 2001).

Titles: As I have said in other articles and as the above experiment clearly demonstrates, titles like 'MSc', 'PhD' etc. never fail to impress people about your competence – so if you have

them, flaunt them! (On how effective this 'aura' can be, see also Goldstein, Martin & Cialdini 2007). Similarly, if you happen to work for a prestigious institution, then mention it to your students. I remember how people's faces used to light up when I told them I was an oral examiner for the British Council!

Looks: At the cost of repeating myself, the importance of being good-looking can hardly be exaggerated. Not only does this quality affect the 'marks' one gets in virtually all other fields, but there is evidence that this positive pre-disposition of others actually elicits all kind of positive behaviours from them (Aronson 1999). The moral is clear: it pays to work on your appearance!

What about ELT? So, what about our field? Are there any elements which can create a 'Halo Effect'? Yes, there are - two of them: a) Your passport and b) your accent. Let me explain. I believe that if would-be employers receive 2 identical CVs, one from a native speaker and another from a Greek teacher, there are many cases when only the former will be short-listed. I believe that if two Greek EFL teachers go through an interview and one of them has a native-like accent while the other one does not, then the former is far more likely to be hired, even if the latter has better qualifications/more experience. And I am certain that (*ceteris paribus*) native speakers are on average better paid when it comes to private lessons. Now, I do not have any hard evidence for all this, but I am prepared to bet good money that all 3 hypotheses are true. Anyone for research?

~ Nick Michelioudakis
TESOL Greece

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Nick is an Academic Consultant with EDEXCEL who likes to think of himself as a 'front-line



teacher' with a keen interest in Social and Evolutionary Psychology. When not struggling with students, he spends time swimming or playing chess.

Building Your Platform

Having overheard **Nick Robinson** sharing advice on self promotional techniques with a fellow practitioner, I got to thinking that maybe this would be of equal benefit to the readership of the *Teaching Times*. Let us know how you get on ...

Thinking back to the start of the twenty-first century, the concept of a teacher, trainer or author 'promoting' his or herself online in the way we're expected to now was completely unimaginable. The word *blog* wasn't coined until 1999, and blogging didn't really hit its stride until around 2004. And what about Facebook and Twitter? They both feel so much a part of our day-to-day lives that it's easy to forget that they were only founded in 2004 and 2006 respectively. I probably check Facebook and Twitter upwards of twenty or thirty times a day. How did these things become such an integral part of my personal and professional life?

Websites and services such as Facebook, Twitter, and WordPress (the popular blogging platform) come under the broad heading of *social media*, while the use of these applications is termed *social networking*. Social media and social networking are elements themselves of a wider phenomenon (for want of a better word) – that of Web 2.0. If Web 1.0 was about the Web as a 'pipe', where information was poured into one end and consumed at the other, then Web 2.0 is a 'platform', where users collaborate to create content and meaning amongst themselves. Put even more simpler: Web 1.0 was top-down, while Web 2.0 is bottom-up. Put even simpler, think about what YouTube is without the videos that its users upload: an empty shell.

Aside from book sales, an author's influence in the world of ELT used to be judged relatively crudely by their success on the conference circuit: how many plenaries are they doing, that kind of thing. Social media has given us new ways of gauging that influence, and, when combined, they're appropriately referred to as the author's 'platform'. How many Twitter followers does she have? How many people retweet her? How many people visit her blog each month? How does that number compare to people with similar blogs? Do her blog posts get linked to by other blogs? How influential are those other blogs? Does she have fans on Facebook? How many? When she writes something on her Facebook wall, how many



people click 'Like' or write a comment? What kinds of things do they say?

Publishers are interested in an author's platform for the obvious reason that it represents a variety of marketing opportunities. The platform is the author's fan base, and it's not difficult to convince your fans to buy your book; they already like you, after all. But what if you're not an author and have no desire to be one? Should teachers and trainers be worried about their platform? Absolutely!

Your platform is a marketing tool, and marketing is all about creating opportunities for you to get your message out there. That message could be, 'buy my book'. But it could also be, 'I'm a highly effective teacher' or 'I can help you achieve your language learning goals'. Curating a successful platform for yourself can reap benefits in a variety of ways: a new job offer, a new client, an invite to speak at a conference, a tap on the shoulder from a publishing agent.

So how do you go about it, and what are the potential pitfalls? The bare minimum, I'd argue, is a Twitter account, a Facebook profile, a presence on Linked In and a regularly updated blog. If you're worried about some cross-contamination between personal life and work life, then simply create multiple accounts and use them selectively. Bear in mind, though, that the more accounts you have, the more complicated they get to manage. Once you're set up with those basic four – and you've begun following people, adding people, connecting with people and blogging – you're on your way to becoming part of the online ELT community. And that word *community* is an important one to remember. Membership of a community is a two-way street: you can't be part of it if you don't take part in it. So read and comment on other people's blogs; you'll find that they'll start commenting on yours. Retweet some interesting posts from someone's Twitter account; they'll often thank you, follow you back and retweet you themselves in the future – and if you're worried about building your Twitter following, it's amazing what a retweet from someone like Scott Thornbury (with his 5,000+ followers) can do for your follower numbers.

To finish, two warnings. First, authenticity is paramount, and people can sense a lack

of it. Always be yourself. Second, remember that promoting yourself through these channels is a delicate art. If you put enough in, there's a tacit understanding that you can once in a while take something out. So if you've spent the week posting links to interesting content on the Web, sharing resources, and supporting fellow members of the community, no-one begrudges you promoting a new blog post, an upcoming talk or even your new book. But if all you do is talk about yourself or promote yourself, you might as well be speaking into a black hole.

~ Nick Robinson



Nick has worked in ELT since 2001. He is the author of *Cambridge English for Marketing (CUP)* and runs an agency designed to help aspiring ELT authors get published. Visit nickrobinsonELT.com for more information.

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From Macaroons to Cameroons

I've been avidly following TESOL France member, **Fiona MacKenzie**, since she embarked on a VSO project in the Cameroon—eagerly awaiting her bi-monthly updates—internet connection permitting(!) Fiona kindly agreed to share some of her teacher training experience with readers of the *Teaching Times*.

Since September 2011 I have been working as an International Volunteer for the VSO – Voluntary Service Overseas – in the Far North region of Cameroon. My placement is for a Primary English Teacher Trainer at the English Language Resource Centre (ELRC) in Maroua. I work in partnership with the Inspector for the Promotion of Bilingualism to review and develop teacher training modules on English Language Teaching in the Primary classroom, to create teacher training workshops for French-speaking teachers teaching English in Primary schools in this region and to organize and co-facilitate the training across the region. The overall aim is to build the capacity of staff and review their training and assessment which includes revising and improving modules, creating and delivering training sessions and evaluating teacher training activities.

Cameroon is a bilingual country, although the majority of the population are not bilingual. There are over 250 dialects throughout the country and only 2 English-speaking regions against 8 French-speaking regions. The Government requires children to begin learning the official second language (after French) – English - from the beginning of Primary School. Learners already speak their mother tongue, they are then supposed to master French as well as English at the same time when they begin Primary School which is a great challenge for the teachers.

The major difficulties local teachers face here are lack of teacher training, teaching materials, teaching knowledge, skills and methodology as well as a general lack of confidence in own English language skills. There is a general lack of qualified teachers, lack of pedagogical materials, and lack of experience of teacher trainers in the primary school environments. Also, the general size of classes consists of over 100 pupils.

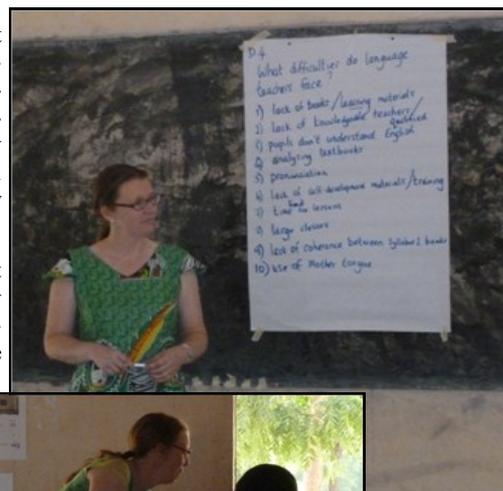
In class observations I have seen how teachers are afraid to speak English, they translate everything into French, and they stick to the textbook without understanding the purpose of the exercise or adapting

it to their pupils. Everything is taught parrot-style; the pupils repeat everything the teacher says without understanding a word the teacher has actually said. I have been greeted so many times by 'good morning sir' and when I ask the pupils 'How are you?' they repeat the question!

My philosophy has always been that kids should have fun and I generally play the clown in front of the children. Here teachers are afraid to be ridiculed or lose control of class discipline, but of course we know that if classes are engaging the pupils will be motivated to learn. I have recently visited some schools to do songs in class using the pupils to mime, show objects and teach the lesson, there have been about 90 kids in each class and they have remained attentive and under control. Obviously I am a novelty to them being a 'nassara' or white person which has its advantages. I have also attended classes where the teachers have fallen asleep in class and believe it or not the kids actually remain well-behaved and let the teacher sleep! Class discipline here consists of the 'chicote' a type of whip, or children stand on one leg and one hand in front of the class, also teachers think nothing of slapping a child. Trying to explain other methods are more appropriate is new to them.

The general purpose of the teaching workshops is to tackle the issue of lack of trained and motivated teachers by creating a programme which increases teachers' confidence in using English in the classroom and encourages teachers to use more participatory activities in the classroom. By developing language teaching methodology, we aim to improve the quality of classroom teaching and the learning environment for boys and girls in selected schools in the Far North region. The principle is that teachers with better skills and increased motivation will improve the quality of education provided and therefore benefit the children.

Our main objective is to provide the teachers with the basic teaching skills which can be used not just for teaching English but across the curriculum – better classroom management, increased use of par-



Fiona MacKenzie

participatory gender inclusive and interactive teaching methodologies

by teachers, improved lesson preparation and planning, etc. The workshops use a range of teaching methods and activities, covering group and individual work and presentations, games and plenary discussions. Topics covered so far include schemes of work, lesson planning, analyzing textbooks, methods for introducing new language and classroom English.

During the Teacher training sessions which have already been carried out teachers have discussed the numerous ways of introducing new vocabulary – mimes, pictures song, games etc. One group of teachers said they would use a pupil to explain the verb to cry – they did not mean the pupil would mime. When asked the question how, the answer was that you can always find a child crying in the playground - the mindset here is very different from Europe! We had teachers playing games and singing songs and I am happy to say that the majority said they had gained confidence in their teaching. Hopefully by improving the confidence and motivation of primary school teachers in using English in the classroom, this will reflect in their teaching and on the children.

A modern languages graduate, **Fiona** moved to Paris in 1996 to work as a bilingual PA. Becoming a TEFL trainer and a TESOL France member in 2006, she has already taught in Indonesia and is currently teaching in Cameroon.

From Macaroons to Cameroons, contin.

Creating learning materials is an essential element of teaching and this may increase access to language teaching resources and encourage innovation and creativity in the classroom which is greatly lacking. Our next training session will focus on creating teaching materials. Everything we use in Europe like plastic bottles and cardboard boxes already have a specific purpose here and so cannot be used for teaching so I am trying to discover what can be made with bottle tops and plastic bags. Any suggestions are more than welcome! We also

want to focus on using songs and stories in their teaching too.

It is always a selected number of teachers that can attend the workshops but they are then designated to pass on what they have learnt to their colleagues in their own schools. Unfortunately we cannot teach all the teachers in schools and there is no system of substitute teachers here as already there is a shortage of teachers.

I often mention TESOL France in the

training sessions, trying to encourage teachers to share their ideas and experiences, explaining that meeting other teachers and discussing experiences is extremely useful. I hope that the teachers will share best practices and improve their teaching strategies in order to improve the quality of primary education provided here in the Far North of Cameroon.

~ Fiona Mackenzie
TESOL France Member

Looking for Summer Work?



Teaching has many rewards, but basking in the highest income tax brackets is definitely not one of them. Teachers who are self-employed or have several part-time employers seldom find summers a time of sea, sand, and fun. Two or even three months with little or no work can be a time of belt-tightening and sometimes hardship. Having worked now for just over 50 years, Denny Packard has had some experience looking for work, so here are a few leads that you may want to look into.

- A few language schools offer classes in the summer, but they obviously prefer teachers who will stay through the fall. You might find their ads at <http://fusac.fr>.
- Attica bookshop here in Paris has a notice board where job ads are sometimes posted. Other booksellers may offer a similar service.
- The Centre de Linguistique Appliquée at the University of Franche-Comté in Besançon runs quality intensive English courses during the summer, and extra teachers are needed to meet the demand. (They also provide help finding housing in Besançon.)
- For those willing to travel abroad, there are summer courses in Britain, Ireland, and the U.S. which hire teachers. See Shara Brennan's 'Summer School Fun?!' in the *Teaching Times*, Autumn 2010 for valuable tips and insights into teaching summer schools in the UK.
- The language exchange operator NACEL (<http://nacel.fr>) hires a few teachers for short *Classe Préparatoire* courses for French students which they organize across the channel. You are both teacher and chaperone, and the pay is only adequate considering the work involved and the level of responsibility. Should you get this job, you'll need to ask some French *Classe Préparatoire* teachers to help you prepare. This type of teaching is very different from what most native-English speaker teachers are accustomed to.
- American universities expect a Master's degree in applied linguistics or TEFL, but divine intervention did land me a much-needed job at an American university 10 years ago. (It was the middle of the summer, and they were desperate for a replacement teacher. Because I had a pulse they were more than happy for me to save their tootsies.) I've been blessed in that they've taken me back every summer since.
- Willing to look beyond teaching? Aéroports de Paris and Disneyland hire a lot of people (especially multilingual) for the summer, but applying early is the key while the best jobs are still available. Be sure to dumb down your C.V. to a maximum if you want to get a minimum-wage job at Disneyland. However, if you aspire to a position with some responsibility, ignore this advice!

I have had some success finding work as a busboy and fast-food worker in the U.S. But sadly not all my efforts were rewarded. By *pulling strings* one summer, I was offered a job at Hershey Park (amusement park) *because I speak 3 languages* at \$5.15 an hour. For housing they offered to rent me a tent in a campground for *only* \$75 a week. I did the math and turned it down...

I know how frustrating it is to have 2 or 3 months with no work, but with a little extra effort, perseverance, (and prayers?), you might be successful. I don't know if these leads will get you anywhere, but **I wish you every success!!!**

~ Denny Packard
TESOL France Jobs List Manager

Denny is a Charter Member of TESOL France and manager of its Jobs List. He has taught English in France for 35 years and presently teaches part-time at Télécom & Management SudParis, Ecole Centrale, and Télécom ParisTech.





31st Annual International TESOL France Colloquium

Paris, France

16 - 18 November 2012

Plenary Speakers

Thomas S.C. Farrell is Professor of Applied Linguistics at Brock University, Canada. His professional interests include Reflective Practice, and Language Teacher Education and Development.

His recent books include *Teaching Practice: A Reflective Approach*: New York: Cambridge University Press (2011, with Jack Richards). In 2012 his book *Reflective Writing for Language Teachers* will appear (Equinox, UK).

Sponsored by:



Mark Powell is a business communication skills trainer, one-to-one coach and instructional designer.

A leader in the field of presentations training, in his 25-year career he has worked with many well-known international companies. Mark currently runs courses and gives keynote conference presentations all over the world.

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Thomas S.C. Farrell



Mark Powell

www.tesol-france.org

Speaker Proposals Deadline: 30 June 2012

Creative Fun with the Arts

After two years of teaching art history students, **Christina Rebuffet-Broadus** has learned a few things about bringing art and creativity into the classroom. She has found out that your students don't have to be artists to appreciate the arts and that sometimes, our learners are more creative than we give them credit for.

A lot of teachers I know have a certain creative streak. After all, we spend lots of time creating materials, cutting and pasting, and designing lessons, which, while not exactly on a par with Picasso, does require a touch of artistry.

'But I can't use artsy-fartsy stuff with my business students!' 'The semester program is already overloaded with subject-related modules—I don't have time to play around with art!' 'My learners are too embarrassed to speak in class, let alone act out a scene!' There's a palette of excuses for sticking to the 'serious stuff,' but that's all they are ... excuses.

Given the vague nature of the words 'art' and 'creativity,' it might be a good idea to present some key words related to these notions. In his book, *Art and Artistry*, Alan Maley proposes the following:

*flow balance playfulness creativity
elegance harmony joy co-creation
choice sensuality risk deep-
processing discovery
(aaaah!) openness humor
space physicality curiosity relaxed
energy
economy cooperation independence
visualization personal commit-
ment story mutual-esteem
non-judgmental*

Classrooms that encourage student discovery, playfulness, cooperation, and independence exude an atmosphere conducive to learning. Using the arts to support language learning can help create that sort of atmosphere. Here are a few ideas for tapping into students' more creative side:

Art

In groups, students are given a painting that will become the basis of a script and mini-play. I've used *The Ransom* and *Yes*, both by Jean Everett Millais but any narrative scene would work fine. Students imagine what is happening in the painting, create and assign characters, write the script, then rehearse and perform their play for the class. Students really get into their characters, offering a fun opportunity

to address intonation, speech rhythm, and diction.

Music

Use music to set the scene for a lesson. Imagine playing *New York, New York* by Frank Sinatra (or Alicia Key's *Empire State of Mind* for teen learners) before a lesson on describing cities or suggesting things to do in your area. For business learners, the Mission Impossible theme could set the tone for a lesson on problem solving. Playing classical music while learners do in-class writing is another popular use of music to stimulate students' neurons.

Literature

After studying a poem, the teacher brings in props that recall the mood of the poem. I like Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven* and a box full of Halloween decorations, but you'll need to keep your learners' level in mind. After studying the poem, small

"... Imagination is more important than knowledge"

Albert Einstein

groups of students create a 3-dimensional still life using the decorations.

They could then interpret each others' creations and explain their own.

Following the above activity, consolidate by having students write short stories in the same mood as the poem. Recycling the vocabulary gives students some hands-on manipulation of new language and building up to the story writing with other activities gives ample opportunities for inspiration.

Bring a short but familiar story to class. Abridged fairy tales, well-known Greek myths, and even summaries of popular films can work well. Invite students to look at familiar things in new ways, perhaps by creating different roles for the characters, inventing a different end to the story, or flipping the goodies with the baddies. Another option is to have students share something that happened to them recently, which works well in business contexts.

You'll notice that in the above activities, a lot of the workable language will come from the students themselves. The teacher may bring in a poem, a painting, or props but the way these artistic elements become ELT tools depends a lot on what the students do with them. Simplicity and honing in on students' reactions to the stimulus sets up an environment where the teacher can focus on the students and the students

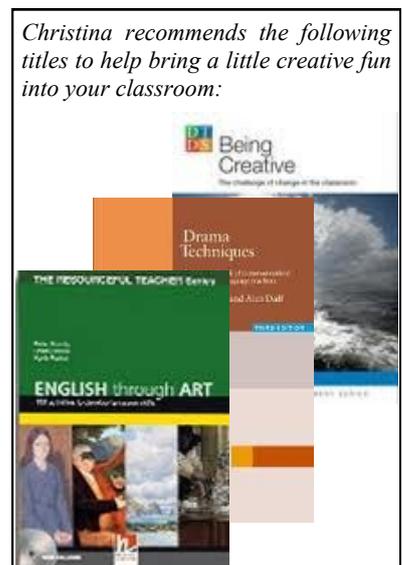


The Ransom, J.E. Millais

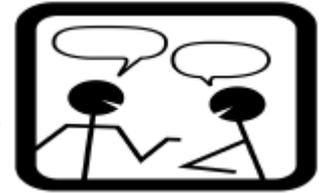
can focus on fostering their own creativity, expressed through new language. It may seem a bit of a risk for teachers who are used to working from books, worksheets, or pre-determined vocabulary lists. Risk too comes with being creative.

Many of the arguments cited in the beginning of this article stem from the results-and efficiency-based approach that so many schools and companies apply to everything, including learning. As we all know, stress rarely supports learning. And how can we truly measure genuine learning? Using arts in the classroom, letting your learners have fun, and showing them that they too can express their creativity in many different ways can motivate both learner and teacher. So, now what's your excuse?

~ **Christina Rebuffet-Broadus**
Coordinator, TESOL France Grenoble



Christina recommends the following titles to help bring a little creative fun into your classroom:



Moderated Discussion

Shahada Reardon proposes a worksheet that will encourage students to speak in their L2!
Smaller groups for optimized speaking time!

Getting Started

- ✓ Get into groups.
- ✓ Choose a moderator (*see description below*).
- ✓ Choose a scorekeeper (*see description below*).

⚠ ALL group members must speak—including the scorekeeper. The moderator can only ask questions.

Moderator

You've got the power ... but you must set the example!

- ✓ Speak English ONLY to encourage the others to do the same.

Lead the discussion.

- ✓ Ask the assigned questions and add your own questions if you like.
- ✓ A skilful moderator is able to encourage group members to bring up a topic or opinion by asking the *right* questions.

Make sure EVERYONE is participating.

- ✓ If you do this well, everyone will finish with about the same score.

⚠ Remember to note down the scorekeeper's points on a piece of paper (*see explanation below*).

Scorekeeper

Note down the points for each member of your group on a piece of paper (*except the moderator*)

- ✓ Give 1 point for each statement in English.
A statement is a sentence.
Uh, yeah, no, what, why, etc. ... are NOT statements.
- ✓ Subtract 1 point for each statement in French.
e.g. 5 statements in English - 1 statement in French = 4 points



The winner is the group member with the most points!

Teachers' Notes

Overview

The objective of this activity is to encourage students to keep talking in the L2 at all times and thus enhance their fluency. It can be adapted to most levels and discussion topics. You can supply students with discussion questions or have them prepare questions as a previous homework assignment. You may also wish to prepare the moderator by giving suggestions on how to encourage other group members to speak. During the activity encourage an element of competition by asking: *'Who's winning?'* This will also remind the scorekeeper to do his/her job; the 'fun' aspect is only maintained if the scorekeeper takes their role seriously.

Giving Feedback

As the activity progresses, move from group to group jotting down mistakes without interrupting the discussion. When the discussion is over you can go over these mistakes (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) without singling out the student(s) concerned. This will also give you an opportunity to observe individual student's speaking ability which is difficult in larger classes

Wrap up

You can have each group summarize the findings from their discussion and present to the rest of the class. You can also summarize the answers you've heard and add points which have not been addressed.

Let Shahada know how this activity worked with your class by contacting her at TESOL.France.Toulouse@live.fr

~ Shahada Reardon
Coordinator, TESOL France Toulouse

Chile–France Exchange



Last year **Phil Wade** had the pleasure of setting up and running an international cultural exchange with another teacher, **Ida Sessarego Espeleta**, based in Chile.

We both worked at similar universities and our students were all studying Engineering. The objective was to help our students learn about another culture firsthand and also make interesting friends. Due to the time difference, not to mention several French bank holidays, carrying out a synchronous class exchange via web cam proved impossible. Although we were concerned about students not doing their homework, we put aside our fears and ran the exchange as an out-of-class activity for one term.

The students

We decided to make the project voluntary to attract motivated students who would do the activities. As word got around we received more requests from students although of course some did drop out as the term progressed due to heavy workloads. In the end we had 40 students in total (20 French, 20 Chilean) and went about grouping them into 4s rather than pair; if one student was unavailable there would always be other opportunities to chat.

The platform

We used a group site called GROUPLY which is a free version of NING. Anyone familiar with Moodle or Blackboard may find it is easier as it's more visual and thus user-friendly. You can also add more apps (via HTML codes) such as a webchat facility. As teachers we were able to set up a Chilean and a French group. We were also able to restrict access and membership to our own students, keep track of their comments, as well as post news either to the page or to their email accounts. Having two different sites meant that we could better communicate with our own students, but that they could also join and visit the other group's site when invited by their partners.

How it worked

Each week we posted a topic with related activities, such as audio and video and discussion questions. The students then had a week to arrange a time with their partners to carry out a video chat via

Skype or the embedded webchat facility. We also added a text discussion forum on the page where students could post photos, videos and comments. One student even initiated a 'lonely student' board; students whose partners were unavailable could post a request to find a new friend.

The end

At the end of our course, students created culture videos about their lives at university and uploaded them for the others to view. This was a great chance to learn more about the other school as well as the lives of its students.

The French Perspective (Phil)

Overview

Most students enjoyed their exchanges and some even joined more groups. Topic-wise, they seemed to prefer fun subjects such as music and film rather than more academically linked ones such as technology. A few said they found it difficult at the start to understand each other as they were only used to hearing people from their own L1, but they soon adapted.

Bumps in the road

Some students had technical problems and could not access the internet or the page. Students registering with school email addresses often had problems accessing their accounts outside class. When students wanted to change their email addresses they had to reregister. During exam and project times participation was very low and some students who did not get a response straight away were reluctant to email their group again and so teachers had to check and encourage students at first as well as re-group students where necessary.

Lessons learned

1. Mixed sex groups seemed to work best; creating a positive chemistry in the groups ensured more regular communication.
2. We should have organized weekly web-conferencing discussions between all the students.
3. Providing extra credits for students actively participating in the exchange would probably increase participation.

The Chilean Perspective (Ida)

Overview

The most difficult challenge was having students work on their own. Chilean students are not used to doing activities if they are not graded. As a result, I had to incorporate the pen pal activities into the

course evaluation, considering it as language laboratory practice. They also asked me 'How do you know I did the activity?' so I had to keep track of their exchanges via the group page.

Bumps in the road

The time difference was an issue. When we started the project there was a four hour time difference but by the end of the semester it was six which made scheduling difficult. The other bump was that French classes took place in the morning while in Chile they usually took place in the evening. For these reasons all of the activities had to be done asynchronously outside the class sessions.

Lessons learned

1. I also believe that mixed sexes worked better, it is kind of appealing to work with someone from the opposite sex, although there are not many women studying in our universities.
2. To try to agree on one weekly session for computer lab synchronous activities with students from all the courses.
3. Some activities have to be graded. Chilean students are more motivated if they receive a mark.

Summary of Student Feedback

- It was the first pen-palling experience for the students,
- Only about half were able to contact their partners,
- Music was the most popular topic,
- What they enjoyed the most: *I learned so much about life in France. / I learned about a new culture and shape of life.*
- What they found most difficult: *Time to talk.*
- 80% would participate again,
- What could be improved: *Do the exchange in labs. / Visit the other school.*

The Future: Second Life

The future of such an exchange may well lie in Second Life (virtual world) although technology is currently an issue...

~ Phil Wade & Ida Sessarego Espeleta



Ida teaches at the Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María Valparaíso in Viña del Mar, Chile. She holds an MA in Educational Technology and is a self-proclaimed 'Webhead'.

Business English Worksheet Series - N°3

The Case: Crowdsourcing

Define your Terms

Crowdsourcing is about 'taking a job traditionally performed by a designated employee and outsourcing it to an undefined, generally large group of people' - Jeff Howe

1. Input

- With a partner read the statements about Crowdsourcing and decide if they are true (T) or false (F).
 - Crowdsourcing involves dividing projects into smaller tasks for large groups of freelancers. T / F
 - Crowdsourcing is useful for long-term projects. T / F
 - Crowdsourcing is becoming highly profitable. T / F
 - Crowdsourcing only creates website design jobs. T / F
 - Crowdsourcing is criticised for giving freelancers less work. T / F
- Read the text at <http://bit.ly/wxJHlt> and compare your answers.
- With your partner, discuss how the projects and tasks involved in these full-time jobs could be crowdsourced out to freelancers.
accountant, CEO, finance director, sales executive, software engineer

2. Task

- With your partner, choose a company you know well and discuss which job would be best suited to crowdsourcing.
- With your partner, choose one specific task related to the job and break it up into sub-tasks that could be crowdsourced out to multiple freelancers. Use the information to complete the diagram on the right.
- Present your ideas to the rest of the group, explaining your decisions.

Crowdsourcing

Original task: _____

Sub-tasks:

1.1 _____

1.2 _____

1.3 _____

1.4 _____

1.5 _____

1.6 _____

3. Discussion

- With your partner or in small group, discuss these questions.*
- Explain how easy/difficult the task was and why?
 - How can your company/a company you know exploit crowdsourcing?
 - To what extent do you think this is the future of business?

Extra Reading

- <http://www.crowdsourcing.org/>
- <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/14.06/crowds.html>

Teachers' Notes

To download the **Teachers' Notes** for this activity, visit the **TESOL France blog** at tesolfrance.blogspot.com

~ Eric Halvorsen & Phil Wade
Editorial Team

Aviation English & the ICAEA

If you thought aviation English was a fairly recent phenomenon, then you'd be mistaken. Paris-based **Fiona Robertson's** 'Airspeak' was originally published in the 90s. Fiona talks to us today about the ICAEA, an association with a very special ESP remit.

A wish to bring together both users and the teachers in an aim to improve the standard of English language in aviation, led to the organisation of several Aviation English Forums in the 1980's. The international success of these events, which took place in Paris, led in turn to the creation of the International Civil Aviation English Association (ICAEA), in 1991, as a non-profit-making organisation. Since then, a small group of dedicated volunteers have been running conferences and workshops on aviation English. Until recently these took place in Europe, but in the past two years we have extended our reach into Asia and South America.

Our events are self-funding and typically, about 100 delegates attend our Forums. The registration fees are calculated to cover costs plus a little extra which is then used for general running costs, participation in events of other relevant associations and to engage in other activities to promote the quality of English in aviation e.g. the development of the ICAEA website. This can only be achieved because organisations agree to host the events and provide a venue free of charge.

There are many different aspects of aviation English as each specialised occupation has its own specialised language. The airline check-in agent and the airline pilot have quite different language needs, for example. While raising the standards of English language use in all parts of the aviation world is important, the area which has the most immediate effect on airline safety is the pilot-controller dialogue.

The International Civil Aviation Organisation or ICAO, which is a UN agency based in Montreal, is the regulatory body for civil aviation. The ICAO draws up the regulations on which each Member State bases its own Civil Aviation Authority licensing regulations. It recently introduced a regulation which requires all controllers and pilots to have a specific level of English language competence not just in radiotelephony phraseology, but also in

more general aviation English, which is termed 'plain English'. Much of the language used in the pilot-controller dialogue comes within the highly coded language of routine phraseology, but there are also more non-routine events for which 'plain English' must be used.

This new regulation has meant that pilots and controllers worldwide had to be tested for their level of English, and as a consequence different tests have been created for this task. Our association has been involved in producing a series of calibrated recorded speech samples for ICAO, to help trainers and achieve inter-rater reliability.

In addition, ICAEA is now assisting ICAO with a test accreditation project.

But having English language proficiency regulations in place is only half the battle. In order to achieve and maintain the required level of English, there needs to be:

- relevant and well-designed materials;
- competent, well-trained and qualified teachers;
- appropriately planned and delivered courses;
- reliable tests.

As mentioned earlier, aviation English is not just about radiotelephony phraseology and 'plain English' as used by pilots and controllers. There are many other users of English in the aviation sphere; ground staff of all kinds, engineers, coordinators, maintenance crew, cabin crew, airport staff, airline staff and civil aviation authority staff, etc.

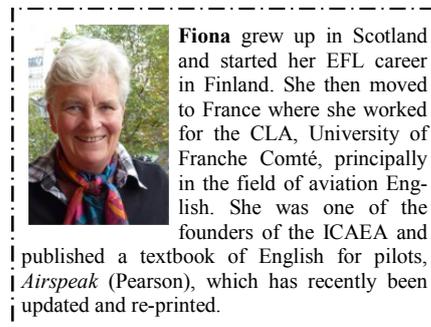
We must also consider the wider context in which we wish to conduct this drive for improved English standards. In 2011 the ICAEA was granted NGO status by the United Nations. Part of the ICAEA's remit is to help create the conditions for improving aviation English standards by providing support, expertise and teacher training in the developing world.

However, this is a hard-pressed industry. There is increasing competition from low-

cost companies, and a consequent reduction of profit margins. There is also fast expansion in civil aviation in India, China and Russia. Africa is poised to become a giant tourist destination, and South America too is ready for air travel expansion. All of which will bring competition for qualified personnel. Rising fuel costs present an additional challenge. It is hoped that despite these economic pressures, improvements in English language standards for pilots and controllers will lead to similar efforts for other aviation professions.

~ **Fiona Robertson**

The ICAEA is a non-profit organisation running conferences and workshops on aviation English.



For more information about the work of the ICAEA, go to their website at www.icaea.pansa.pl or visit the ICAEA Facebook page.



Post-It Fever: A language teacher's best friend

Forget Interactive Whiteboards and mobile learning, **Eric Halvorsen** has THE answer ...

Ok, let's all try a short activity. I would like you to make a list of classroom equipment and materials that are an essential part of your lessons. Ok, take 1 minute and make a list. Ready? Go. No, really make the list. Stop trying to read *on!*

So, what did you include? A flipchart? A whiteboard? A laptop, maybe? Photocopies of your favorite exercises? An ipod? A smartphone? All of these were on my list. But another 'must-have' has recently made it almost to the top of that list: Post-It notes. I don't mean just one pack; I mean multiple packs, different color packs, all shapes and sizes.

About a year ago, I read *The Business English Teacher* (Delta Publishing) by Barton *et al.* Post-It notes took on a central role in a number of the lesson frameworks they suggested and this inspired me to start using Post-Its more frequently in my lessons. Then, seeing how much my students were enjoying them, I started using them more and more until they had earned their permanent place in my briefcase, right next to my white board markers, and grammar book. Not a lesson goes by where I don't use them for something. They have now replaced sheets of paper in almost every exercise I do. There is just so much more you can do with them; you can move them around, stick them on the wall (or your forehead), mix them up, organize them by color, make them into paper airplanes. They can jazz up dictations, dialogue writing, storytelling, vocabulary drilling, translation exercises and even just warm-up discussion activities.... I'm getting dizzy just thinking about the possibilities.

Below I'd like to share a few activities that have been a hit with my small groups of Business English students Hopefully this will infect you with the Post-It note fever and get you thinking about how you can shake up your teaching with these sticky little sheets of awesomeness.

The Post-It Dictation

Aim: Form-focus, listening for detail, spelling.

Material:

- Any short text or dialogue with key language that you'd like your students to remember
- Post-It notes – preferably a different color for each student

Procedure:

1. Proceed as you would normally for a dictation, except instead of having the students write on sheets of paper, have them write on Post-Its. For every complete phrase or sentence of 5 to 10 words students should start a new Post-It. For example: Post-It N°1: *Have you looked at the minutes from last meeting?* Post-It N°2: *No, not yet. I'll get on it right away.*
2. Continue until the end of the dictation (I would recommend 5 to 10 Post-It's worth of conversation).
3. Once everyone has finished the dictation ask one student to put their Post-Its up on the wall of the classroom, in a vertical line, in the order they were written. Then, ask other students to put their Post-Its next to the first student's, following the same order. The students should remain standing near their Post-Its.
4. Correct the dictation. I do this by having the students walk along the wall and take down any Post-Its they think are incorrect. I then go through and make the 'final cut', handing any incorrect Post-Its back to the students and asking them to correct them.

Variation:

If the sentences you used for the dictation are functional phrases that can be used in discussions, meeting or telephone situations, have students keep their Post-Its and allow them to use the Post-Its like playing cards or 'phrase cards' during the next role play. When they feel that a certain expression would be appropriate in the role play, they place their 'phrase card' on the table and use the expression.

Post It Fever, contin.

Post-It Ranking

Aim: Getting to know one another, discussion, fluency development, pushing students' vocabulary and speaking ability, superlatives, professional vocabulary.

Material:

- Post-It notes (two different colors, e.g. yellow and pink).

Procedure:

1. Divide the class into 2 groups. They don't necessarily have to sit in a group. Distribute 5 yellow Post-Its to each student in one half of the class and 5 pink Post-Its to the other half.
2. Ask the students to write down one task that they do as part of their job in a typical week on each Post-It. For example, if they work in IT, one Post-It could be *'keep track of traffic on intranet and report to manager'* and another could be *'go to meetings with suppliers'* and another something simple such as *'check and respond to emails'*.
3. Once they've written down 5 things they do in a typical week, have the students with yellow Post-Its rank them from most to least important, and the students with the pink Post-Its from most to least time-consuming.
4. Pair students up with someone who has a different color Post-It and have them explain their ranking. Be sure to specify that the listener should be *actively listening*, asking questions, reacting, etc. The teacher should circulate and help with vocabulary and note down any mistakes or interesting words/expressions that the whole class might find useful. **Optional:** Depending on the number of students in your class, two or all of the students then explain their ranking to the whole class.
5. During the activity a lot of interesting vocabulary and errors should have come up organically in the conversation. Go over these language points on the board.

Post-It Note Silent Dialogue

Aim: Reviewing key business phrases in telephone or one-to-one meeting situations or as a creative writing activity.

Material:

- Post-It notes

Procedure:

1. Put the students into pairs.
2. Choose a role play situation that you think is important for your students. Write the details of the situation on the board or on slips of paper. Try to make it as close to *their* reality as possible.
e.g. *Your supplier sent the wrong number of 'thingamajigs' (you pick the product depending on context). Call them, explain the problem and decide on how the problem could be rectified.*

You can either choose one situation for all the pairs, or you can give a different situation to each pair. It is important that the information is detailed enough that it seems realistic, but vague enough that they don't know necessarily what the other person is going to say. Allow their imaginations to fill in the details. For example, *The supplier says that they are low at that particular product and will ship the remainder of the order next week*, that is too much detail. There is no point in writing the dialogue because they already basically know the outcome.

3. The students then have a 'silent dialogue' on the Post-It notes. Every line of the dialogue should be on a new Post-It.
e.g. Post-It 1: *Hello, PTS Office Supplies*
Post-it 2: *Yes, hello. This is Eric Halvorsen calling from TESOL France. Could I speak to John Smith?*
4. As the students are writing their dialogues, the teacher should be circulating with a pack of different color Post-Its. If the teacher notices that there is some sort of unnatural transition in the conversation, the teacher simply places a Post-It between the two Post-Its that are unnatural, signaling to the student that they need to add something here. The teacher can also place a Post-It next to a student's Post-It if when they notice a major mistake. This signals to the student that they need to re-write that particular part of the dialogue.
4. Once the students have finished and the teacher has provided feedback through the different colored Post-Its, the students can then divide up the Post-Its, each student taking their own and perform their dialogue for the class using the Post-Its to help them remember their lines.

.....

Conclusion

In all of these activities the Post-Its allow students to play with the language and their ideas in a way that wouldn't be possible on a blank sheet of paper. It also allows the teacher to provide feedback in different ways, by putting the Post-Its on the wall or by using different colors. The possibilities are endless! If you have any other ideas for how Post-Its can be used in the classroom I would love to hear from you.

~ Eric Halvorsen
Editorial Team

Focus on IELTS Writing Ideas



As part of our series on the IELTS, **Phil Wade** takes us through the writing section of the test, providing advice on how to avoid seven of the most common

mistakes committed by students.

Description

The academic writing paper for the IELTS test is 60 minutes long and is divided into 2 sections. In *Part 1* you should spend about 20 minutes describing one or more visual images such as a graph, chart, table or map. You may alternatively be given a diagram of a machine, a device or even a process and have to explain how it works. The word count is 150 words. In *Part 2* you should spend the remaining 40 minutes writing an essay on a given topic and support it with evidence. Here you should write 250 words.

Mistake N°1

Writing about the topic in general and not

Read and read again the question to make sure you understand ALL of it then plan a text which will answer all parts equally. Don't just write what you know about pollution just because that is the topic.

answering the question fully.

Mistake N°2

Using buzz, 'hot' or 'cool' words or idioms in an attempt to gain a high mark.

If you are pre-int then using idioms in your text will definitely stand out and not match the style of the rest. You should also take into account the register as part 1 is short and demands concise graphic description language while part 2 would suit more academic essay style language. Although idioms could be used well and naturally by a higher level student. The official advise is to write academically or neutrally not informally.

Mistake N°3

Writing too little or too much. The word count should be adhered to as closely as possible.

Practise planning and writing to the word limit then when you write divide the section up with the word count in mind. After you've finished always carry out a word count and alter things as necessary.

Mistake N°4

Writing and then copying up a rough draft which wastes lots of time.

Plan, plan, plan it well and write to the plan.

Mistake N°5

Lots of mistakes.

Always leave time at the end to go over your work and change it as necessary.

Mistake N°6

Running out of time and not finishing the exam.

Time keeping and planning are essential so you should allocate your time to each section carefully. For part 2 Read the question and plan topic sentences + supporting evidence for each section. In general P1 is an introduction and an outline. P2 is the first point and support. P3 is the second and P4 is the conclusion.

Mistake N°7

Plagiarism or copying. This is when you add an obviously memorised sentence or extract into the writing which clearly is not your own work. This should be avoided.

Don't just stick in something you remember, use your own ideas and language that *you* yourself use.

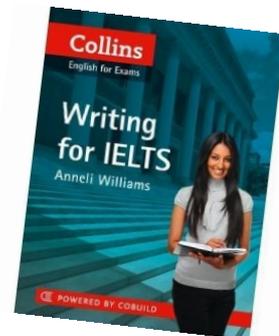


Time Management for the Essay

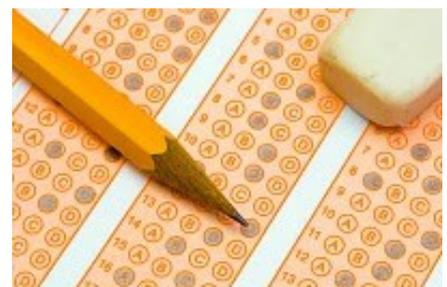
Planning your time and ideas effectively is essential. Here's a sample time frame for you to follow:

0-5 mins:	Read the question and plan
6-20 mins:	Write the introduction and paragraph N°1
21-35 mins:	Write paragraph N°2 and the conclusion
36-40 mins:	Reread the essay and check it answers ALL the question then do a word count and make corrections.

Useful Resources



<http://http://ieltsites.wordpress.com/>



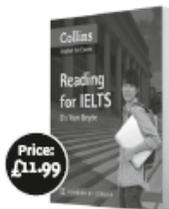
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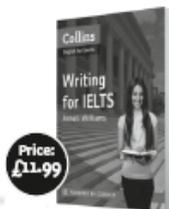
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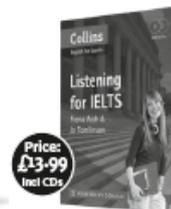
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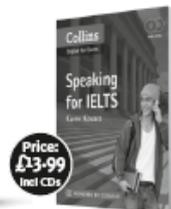
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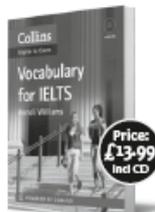
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52 – *theround*, 2012



by Lindsey Clandfield & Luke Meddings

Studying for an MA in ELT Materials Development, I had the good fortune to work with the ‘subversive’ Brian Tomlinson, whose passion was turning ELT coursebook design on its head and who was, almost definitely, ahead of his time. As future authors, he alerted us to the fact that major ELT publishers often provided writers with lists of taboo subjects; something I had initially taken with a pinch of salt. 10 years on, and here I am reviewing *52*, a new e-book that has most certainly NOT been subjected to the said list and instead flies entirely in the face of traditional coursebook design.

Bringing music to Tomlinson’s ears, the e-writing duo—Lindsay and Luke—refer to their desire to focus on the ‘critical’ and the ‘subversive’ and as such to develop activities that normally wouldn’t ‘get past the publishers’ radar’.

An activity based around the acronym *PARSNIP*, representing many of those so-called taboo subjects, encapsulates for me the whole ethos of *52*. Learners are asked whether or not Politics, Alcohol, Religion, Sex, Narcotics, Isms (communism, atheism) and Pork, are suitable topics for discussion in the language classroom. Using this activity as part of a Needs Analysis may well serve to gauge your learners’ tolerance of such topics and as such enable you to decide whether or not to include one or more of them in your course. It might also bring to light culture- and time-specific differences: in the UK some may feel that the subject of narcotics is no longer a taboo, for example, while in France; N is more likely to stand for Nationalism or National Front.

As you move through the activities proffered by *52*, you’ll find some that set out to challenge our critical thinking processes: *Running* invites learners to consider a Nike ad from an alternative perspective. While other activities, such

as *Pen!*, are more aimed at developing learner autonomy. Also making an appearance in *52* are cross-dressers, burkha-clad females and bottom pinchers – subversive indeed!

For Dogme converts, *52* promotes a text-lite approach with the aim of drawing directly from the learner. The activities challenge learners to look beyond the rose-tinted world still presented by so many ELT coursebooks and actually discuss topics that matter.

Luke and Lindsay warn that ‘*this book is not for everyone*’. However, before making *your* decision, take the time to carry out the virtual flick test and experiment a little with this brand new e-book. I’m sure many of your learners will be only too pleased you did.

~ Ros Wright
Editor

Real Lives, Real Listening – *Northstar ELT*, 2012

by Sheila Thorn

All too often coursebooks present rather sanitized listening passages; neatly scripted audio texts, devoid of the common features of spoken English (ellipsis, assimilation, etc.). In addition, they are often recorded in high-tech studios, free from background noise and at a speed considered ‘acceptable’ for the particular target audience. In contrast, *Real Lives, Real Listening* introduces learners to authentic, unscripted listening extracts in the form of interviews with native and competent non-native English speakers. The idea behind the series is to train learners to listen more effectively to informal spoken English and as such boost their confidence once outside the confines of the ELT classroom.

Before launching into a set of com-

prehension questions, *Real Lives (Elem)* takes the time to first prime the learner by pinpointing specifics of the particular accent they are about to hear: the Londoner who drops his *hs* or the short ‘*a*’ sound of the Welsh nurse. Leading learners gently through each extract, *Real Lives* seeks to develop awareness of intonation patterns and aspects of pronunciation - recognising weak forms or discriminating between minimal pairs – and thus enable an enhanced understanding of the speaker’s message.

Unlike more traditional coursebooks, *Real Lives* exploits its listening extracts to the full, by also treating lexical and grammatical features of spoken English as well as proposing transfer tasks to further develop the learner’s skills. Our old favourite, the listening comprehension, does finally make an appearance, as a means of encouraging learners to consolidate their understanding of the

factual information in the passage. Each unit includes a transcript, complete with *ums* and *ers*, as well as a very useful glossary of the words and expressions encountered in the passage with definitions provided in graded English and stressed syllables highlighted in red.

Sheila reminds us that listening, unlike reading or writing, is also a sense; one that we subconsciously use to help us understand the world around us. Training learners to make the most of that sense in a new linguistic environment is rather more involved than simply plugging them into a podcast and hoping they can answer the comp questions that follow. *Real Lives, Real Listening* leaves nothing to chance.

~ Ros Wright
Editor



Absolute Legal English – Delta, 2010



by Helen Callanan & Lynda Edwards

Absolute Legal English is a slim volume packed full of relevant activities and authentic material. It is a wonderful resource for legal English courses in general, and test preparation for the Cambridge International Legal English Certificate (ILEC) in particular. The authors' pragmatic approach helps students develop the language needed in international legal contexts.

The book provides clear descriptions of the tasks required on the test and works on developing the skills necessary for success through nine thematic units. Each unit features several texts, which serve as a basis for exercises in comprehension, developing language forms (e.g. converting nouns into adjectives), and conversation on legal topics relevant to the

unit's theme. There are also listening exercises featuring dialogues on an audio CD, their audio transcripts, suggestions for research, an answer key, and a glossary. The book is quite complete.

One thing I liked was the collocations in context, which are introduced as pre-made language 'nuggets' to accomplish specific tasks. Examples include asking for clarification ('*Sorry, I'm not following*') or following the formula for writing a legal memo (e.g., reason for writing: '*As requested, ...*').

Another strong point of the book is the way in which it stimulates conversation among students through role plays, exchanging points of view, and other activities in pairs. This is great practice for the Speaking section of the ILEC in which students must speak for one minute on a legal topic, and also discuss

ways to resolve a particular legal situation with another student.

The book doesn't get boring because the exercises in each unit do not always take the same format; they are adapted to the unit themes.

While this book is based on UK law, English teachers from other countries can still feel comfortable using it. As an American having worked in the legal field myself, I found that my knowledge was relevant to the material presented and felt confident in being able to use this book as a teaching tool.

~ Shani Abergel
Review Team

Management Lessons – PaulEmmerson.com, 2012

by Paul Emmerson

Management Lessons consists of a series of photocopiable worksheets destined for managers. It is aimed not only at developing professional lexis and jargon but also encourages the discussion of hot topics in the field. Divided into 10 topic areas; each representative of modules on a typical MBA/management programme, Paul Emmerson's title offers trainers complete lesson plans suitable for both 1-to-1 and group classes.

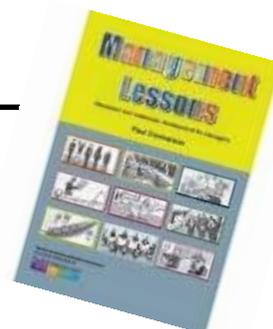
Leadership is one such topic area, focusing on risk analysis and crisis management, while *Operation Strategy* deals with sourcing, purchasing and innovation. Lesson N°33 considers how to go about effectively *Managing Poor Performance* by re-supplying, re-training, re-fitting, re-assigning and releasing. Discussion questions provide the opportunity for managers to bring their experience and knowledge to the fore and ana-

lyse their own skills in this aspect of personnel management, but in English.

Encouraging learners to take control of their learning is every much part of the Emmerson approach. The *Vocabulary development* section encourages them to underline phrases they know but *don't yet use*, while the *Follow up* asks that learners make examples of *their own* using the vocabulary *they* want to practise.

The title does assume a certain prior knowledge of the key concepts on the part of the learner. However, with a little preparation and/or extension work, pre-experience and in-work managers will find this title equally beneficial.

As professionally designed, edited and packaged as any photocopiable book proposed by a big-name publisher, *Management Lessons* is user-friendly and available in pdf or spiral



bound formats. A special student version also exists offering a bilingual glossary in several different languages (www.PaulEmmerson.com for details).

If you are looking for a title to further maximize your learners return on investment, boost their leadership potential and career profiles, whether it be for those already *in situ* or those about to embark on an MBA programme, then *Management Lessons* will go a long way towards achieving your goal.

~ Ros Wright
Editor

Eye on the Web: Film and EFL

As ever, **Phil Wade** has had his eye on the web seeking out the best of the sites dedicated to film. Be they ELT or non, these sites are sure to add colour, animation as well as meaningful content and context to your classes.

Here at the *Teaching Times* we like to keep up with the latest goings on in the EFL world and there's nowhere more up-to-date than the web. As any follower of Lindsey Clandfield and Luke Meddings will know (*turn back to page 28, if you missed a review of their title*), there seems to be a growing movement of self-publication of ELT materials and activities. While publishers are still doing a great job of developing and releasing contemporary titles there is an expanding amount of free online materials, worksheets and ideas. The range and quality of these websites and blogs is mind-blowing and every site you find seems to lead you to another and then another and...



Claudio Azevedo has been running his two blogs for several years and every week without fail he uploads two new lessons and he's also been known to take requests. This site is aimed at providing warmer, follow-up and schemata-activating activities but actually they work just as well as longer activities or as the basis for a whole lesson. The site is arranged per theme and also per film title. Each lesson consists of a topic and discussion activities based around several movie segments. What should be noted is that this is NOT your average 'watch the clip and complete the gist questions' site. Claudio really covers some interesting and controversial areas and has a real gift for spotting and utilizing film scenes. He also makes an effort to teach students about the topic itself by providing additional content information and via the different tasks proposed. Topics such as 'drunk driving, euthanasia and hooligans, are approached in a very accessible and thought-provoking way.

Film-English is run by the multi-award winning Kieran Donaghy. It features academic lessons on a huge range of film related-topics which are not restricted to movies alone. So, here you'll find short films, PowerPoint presentations, downloadable activities, pictures and enough ideas for both film enthusiasts wishing to introduce the medium into the ELT classroom as well as those teaching an entire film studies course. What makes *Film English* really special are the short films Kieran utilizes which are quite innovative and unusual in their own right. For teachers on the lookout for higher level, interesting or content-based materials then this is one site for you and the way Kieran is going he may soon be more famous than many of his films.

Supported by the UK film industry, *Film Education* is a charity which encourages and supports the incorporation of films into mainstream school education. Their huge bank of resources covers primary and secondary schools and ranges from pdf film study worksheets to online trailer making and extremely detailed (UK) National Curriculum compatible lessons. You might also want to check out the staffroom section where you can pick up some helpful tips and additional links.

Other worthy mentions:

<http://www.hhsdrama.com/TeachingFilmStudy.htm>

<http://www.tes.co.uk/media-studies-secondary-teaching-resources/>

~ Phil Wade
Editorial Team



Poet's Place!

Powerful words and sentiments from our resident poet, **Joseph Egwurube** in *tales of kith and kin*.

Of Kith & Kin

Well beyond distant mountains and wide seas
The sound of festive drums the gentle wind first transports
As warm greetings and well wishes are traded
Telling kith and kin settled in different latitudes
How the most precious gold is the bonds that unite
Such bonds all agree provide the eternal light
That enables men and women, the old and the young, from different stations
To embark on life's journey in the same boat
Strengthened in their belief that only in the presence of the other
Can life's many promises with confidence be enjoyed in full
Alas, the ill wind blows, sometimes unannounced, but well often man-made
Eroding long established ties of common destinies
Worldly matters then become grave as kith and kin strange bedfellows become
Such simple words as 'hello' and 'welcome'
Proof that you can count on he or she who so announces
No longer accepted in communion with erstwhile friends now turned strangers
Cracks in bridges are left to widen
As brothers and sisters for the price of an acre fight it out
First with violent words
Then for better measure
The aim being to have a larger portion of the cake
With more deadly instruments
That leave in their wake many collateral victims
Differences in beliefs, birthplace, sex and skin color used to justify
Why the house must only to some be home
Authorized to bathe under the rays of the sun
Others by law required to be eternal tenants
With thousands of pounds of duties and an ounce or two of rights
What if man could be at home everywhere?
Then we would surely paradise on earth have
As kith and kin would everywhere meet
And the joy of saying and hearing 'hello' and 'welcome'
Continue to partake in.
Without the cursory glance behind the shoulder
To verify if what is said and heard is really meant

~ Joseph Egwurube
Editorial Team



Calling All Poets!!!

If you're looking to publish your sonnets, limericks, poems or haiku, contact Joseph at tesol@enst.fr

Mobile Phones in the Classroom: On or Off?

If, like many trainers, you battle with the use of mobile phones in the classroom, then consider this from **Divya Brochier**, who presents another side of the coin.

I attended the TESOL France Professional Development Day in June 2011. The plenary speaker, Ken Wilson, asked a large audience how many were in favor of prohibiting mobile phones in their classrooms. About 95% of the room raised their hands. Then he asked how many didn't mind if their students had access to their mobile phones during the lesson and a few of us raised our hands, but there were very few of us. I was slightly surprised to be in such a small minority.

My purpose in writing this is far from launching into any sort of moralistic argument on classroom management. The reason I allow mobiles has very little to do with the principles of classroom discipline. Of course I think the commitment to an hour or two of language training should include the trainee's undivided attention in order for the full benefit of the lesson to be received. When I was a Full-time student my mobile phone stayed in my bag and was switched off. I sincerely believe this and yet, I allow, and am at times interrupted by, mobile phones. There are firm limits to these interruptions and the occasions where I have found them to be inappropriate are rare.

Why do I do this? I think it is my experience of being a student and teacher at the same time that has brought me here. I have been learning Arabic for the past year. I have private lessons for an hour a week. During this hour someone else cares for my children, who are both very young. I wouldn't dream of switching off my mobile phone. I leave it on, in silent mode. The only calls I respond to, if any, are those from the babysitter. I've never used my phone in a manner that abruptly interrupts the lesson. Have I had an emergency drop-everything-and-leave type phone call this past year? No. Do I feel silly for still leaving my phone on during my lesson? No.



If I had to switch off my phone in the lesson, I know I wouldn't be all

there. I would engage in the classroom spectacle, probably quite actively, but I would remain slightly worried (what if the babysitter was trying to reach me) and this emotion would shape my classroom behavior. I also believe that emotions underlie cognition and my learning would thus be affected by this prohibition. And yes, I have my phone on silent mode when I teach. I have never answered it in class and couldn't imagine anything more inappropriate.

Perhaps you think I am a completely paranoid mother. We all have different things that we carry with us throughout our days, which complete our sense of self. Texts, updates and tweets shape a lot of our daily communication. For many, these things have huge professional relevance and importance. Being a phone call away for my children is part of my sense of security and what keeps me together. It's also handy that my clients don't get the impression that when they try to reach me in the middle of the



day that phone is switched off without any reassurance as to when it will be switched on again. They get, what I feel is, the satisfaction of hearing a few rings and then leaving a message with perhaps the notion that it won't be too long before I ring back. Does

this mean that I am a distracted person who has this constant need to be connected? Does it just mean I multi-task? Whatever it is, my need to be connected is definitely part of the parcel.

While I'm aware that my babysitter example would not bear the same weight for the next person, I do feel we all have our reasons for having our mobile phone in the classroom with us. Managing its use, I believe, is part of classroom discipline and the presence of a mobile phone and a disciplined class aren't mutually exclusive. I don't think arguments along the lines of 'ten years ago....' are particularly valid because our lessons take place in a current context and just like we can use YouTube as our richest source of authentic native accents, mobile phones have a huge place in people's lives.

Viewed from an abstract standpoint, people for whom phones are important, find

peace of mind in being allowed to leave them on, which in turn might allow them to engage in classroom activity with greater involvement. Students in 2011 have very different lives to students in 1998, when I was a student. I don't think that my university students' who are waiting to hear back from a job interview are any less affected than I am by the access allowed to or forbidden

"... the act of forbidding something is a battle that should be carefully constructed and a battle that should be worth its while."

from our mobile phones in class. The reasons they have their phones on weigh on their psyche just as much as my reasons do on mine.

Why do I give so much importance to factors that trigger emotional responses? Because I believe that one of the most important discoveries from Zoltán Dörnyei's huge body of research is that teachers are the number one demotivating factor for learners (2001:152). The teacher's attitude has a vital role in the motivational construct and the act of forbidding something is a battle that should be carefully constructed and a battle that should be worth its while. One of the first things we learn when we train in the field of ELT is to make our classes communicative. ELT classrooms today are two-way processes and motivation has such an important place at the heart of this process. I believe we need to judge each learner and gauge the importance of the mobile phone for him/her and accordingly make a decision on the management of this gadget within the lesson. I also believe that sometimes forbidding what we deem a distraction maybe a distraction in itself.

~ **Divya Brochier**
TESOL France Member



Divya teaches English for Academic Purposes at Ecole Centrale

Paris. Her research interests lie in affect, teacher motivation and language policies. Divya blogs occasionally at www.divyabrochier.wordpress.com

TESOL France Bordeaux is Born



February 18th 2012 is a date for the history books. Well ... maybe just the TESOL France history books. On this day 48 English teachers came to the Victoire campus of Université

Bordeaux Segalen and participated in the launch meeting of TESOL France Bordeaux – our newest regional branch.

This meeting had been in the works since the TESOL France Colloquium in November 2011 when Federico Espinosa – the branch coordinator – made the decision to set up this group. When he

Watch out for the next Bordeaux event!

started getting the word out he was hopeful he would get a dozen teachers to participate. Clearly he had underestimated the English teaching population of Bordeaux, as there ended up being four times this many people interested. Several more responded to the flyers with a ‘Can’t make it to this event, but please let me know when you have another’.

“Let me know when you have another event!”

The meeting itself was a great success. Kenneth Beirne, an instructor from ENSEIRB-MATMECA, presented on ‘Stimulating Learner Motivation Through the Use of Film in the Language Learning Classroom’. He provided some fantastic insight into the motivation behind using video in the classroom and gave us some suggestions on how to use the Australian SBS series *Heirlooms*. Vice President, Debbie West, came all the way from

Paris to introduce participants to TESOL France as an organization. The event finished with quick lesson plan presentations from Heather Cleda, Federico Espinosa, Bob Humphreys, Brigitte Lafay and Shannon Tibbs.

There is a fantastic group of teachers in this region and already gears are turning in preparation for a June Technology Workshop. This event will see Chesna Flora and Marguerite Robb leading a hands-on workshop on uses of technology in ELT. Their focus will be online media, social networks, educationally exploitable software/apps, and the use of Smart-board technology for interactive communicative classes. Watch the TESOL France email list for a specific date, and then come and join us. Bordeaux is lovely in June!

~ Federico Espinosa
Coordinator, TESOL France Bordeaux

TESOL France Toulouse Puts on a Mini-conference

While TESOL International was busy holding its Annual Convention in Philadelphia, the regional branch of TESOL France Toulouse was in motion, too! On Saturday March 31, 2012, English teachers from all over the Southwest met for a dynamic mini-conference. A mixture of theory and hands-on lesson ideas filled the day with talks including: *Deviance in L2 Oral Production* (Anthony Stenton), *Using ‘Relational Presence’ to Create a Positive Learning Environment* (Peter Lake) and an inter-cultural awareness game called ‘Barnga’ led by Rosemary Benard. Here’s what some of the participants had to say about their day:

“Useful, informative and congenial atmosphere. Great location, stimulating discussion.”

“Friendly organizers and participants.”

“I liked the fact that the different presentations were short enough; and everything was quite different.”

“Great atmosphere. Interesting Talks.”
Interactive activities.”

Its interesting to see just how many teachers in Toulouse have now become fully fledged members of TESOL France, despite only taking part in events locally. I think they really like feeling a part of the organization.

~ Shahada Reardon
Coordinator, TESOL France Toulouse



Speakers: Peter Lake, Jennifer Harpur & Anthony Stenton

TESOL France Events

Workshop: *Unplugged Teaching with Dogme ELT*

Saturday, 9 June 2012 (9:30-12:30)

Venue: IDRAC Grenoble (Antares building), Grenoble



Global SpellEvent

Saturday, 9 June 2012

Joint event with TESOL International

Venue: TELECOM Paris-Tech, Paris



Workshop: *Technology Workshop*

Saturday, 16 June 2012

Venue: Université Victor Segalen, Bordeaux II, Bordeaux



BESIG Summer Symposium

Saturday 16 June 2012 (9:00 - 18:00)

Plenary Speaker: David Crystal

Venue: TELECOM Paris-Tech, Paris

(TESOL France members registration fee 55€)



Interested in holding a Workshop, have an idea for a speaker or a topic for the next Swapshop?

Then contact
Debbie West
via tesol@enst.fr

Workshop: *Grant Writing for Teacher Development*

Saturday, Sept 2012

Joint event with Pilgrims, UK

Venue: TELECOM Paris-Tech, Paris



31st TESOL Annual Colloquium

16-18 November 2012

Plenary Speakers: Mark Powell & Tom Farrell

Venue: TELECOM Paris-Tech, Paris



Unless stated otherwise, entry to workshops & swapshops is FREE for members of TESOL France, 8€ for non-members. For more information, visit our website: www.tesol-france.org



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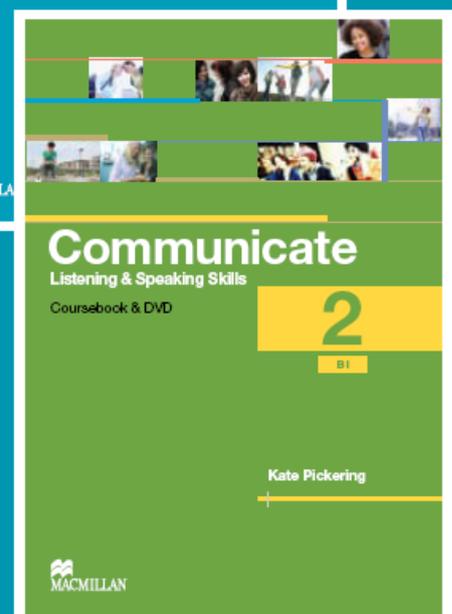
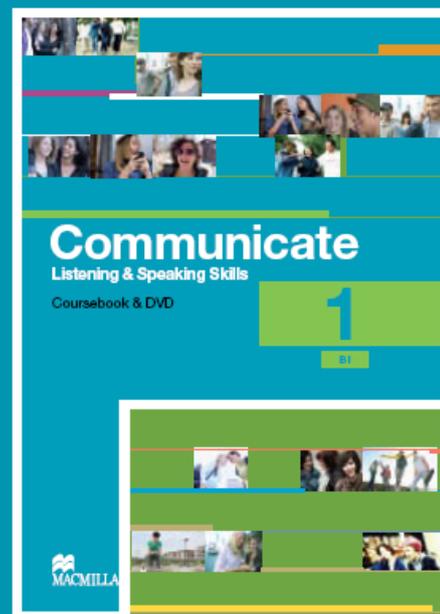


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