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VOICES

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VOICES

From the Editor

From Iceland to India, and many places in between, this issue of *Voices* takes us on a journey around the world.

The first thing you'll notice about this issue is that Harry Kuchah Kuchah's regular 'From the President' column has been replaced with a new regular feature called 'From the Trustees'. This gives you a chance to get to know the IATEFL Trustees, and it gives them an opportunity to tell you what they do and how they make a difference to the organisation. IATEFL Treasurer Colin Mackenzie gets the ball rolling. Colin will soon be stepping down from his position; if, after reading his piece, you are inspired to become involved with IATEFL finances, do get in touch with him.

Have you ever taken a class in something unrelated to ELT and drawn comparisons between the instruction you received and your own English teaching? Briony Beaven has; in this issue's Keynote paper, Briony compares her dance classes to English classes, with lessons to be learned.

In other papers, Tim Thompson provides guidelines for teaching presentation skills; Rania Jabr discusses the use of technology for teaching and assessment; Deak Kirkham looks at the creation of adjectives from proper names; Heloisa Duarte discusses the needs of older students; and Mandira Adhikari shows how she motivated her young learners to develop spelling skills. Alex Fayle completes his two-part series on how to get organised, with some very practical tips.

The SIG Spotlight in this issue is on the Testing, Evaluation and Assessment SIG; look out for some reviews of recently published books related to this aspect of ELT. 'My life in ELT' features Deepti Gupta from India, and in 'What's happening in...?' Samúel Lefever gives us an overview of the ELT world in Iceland.

This is the last issue of *Voices* in 2019. In January, we launched the 'new-look' *Voices*, and I'm thrilled by the positive response to the magazine. I would like to thank our current team (Ruby Vurdien, Reviews Editor; Deborah Bullock, copy editor; and Nathan Hemming-Brown, designer), as well as everyone at Head Office for their support. I would also like to thank everyone who has contributed an article to *Voices* in 2019; if you have not yet written for *Voices*, please consider doing so in 2020.

On a final note, if you celebrate the holidays, I would like to wish everyone a safe and enjoyable festive season. See you next year!

Tania Pattison
Voices Editor
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Tania Pattison, Editor

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From the Trustees

'Oh, you're the Treasurer; that's an important job.' I probably hear that half a dozen times at each IATEFL annual Conference, and my immediate thought is, 'Not as important as the President and Secretary, who head the Conference Committee, or the Vice President, who is in charge of publications, or any of the other Trustees, who are all actively involved in making sure that IATEFL does what we do. Nor, for that matter, more important than the SIG Coordinators and SIG committee members, who put so much into making IATEFL such a dynamic, successful association.'

Of course, I don't say that – that would be rude and probably a bit confusing. I just say, 'Yes!'

I thought it might, therefore, be a good idea to use this first 'From the Trustees' to explain a little about what the IATEFL Treasurer and Finance Committee, and the 'financial' staff, actually do, and to tell you how IATEFL's finances are organised.

Finance 'volunteers'

The Treasurer, along with the Finance Committee, made up of Iwona Minkowska, Karsten Gramkow, Wayne Rimmer and Lizzie Wojtkowska-Wright, is in charge of overseeing IATEFL's financial health. This includes monitoring the financial performance of the organisation, analysing the accounts, supporting the SIGs in preparing budgets, agreeing to expenditure, reviewing our financial strategy, and reporting to and advising the IATEFL Board of Trustees on all of these matters. The Treasurer also plays a full part in all Board of Trustees affairs, financial and otherwise.

To work on strategy, the Committee meets face-to-face at the Conference and once or twice in the year by conference call. We look at all aspects of IATEFL's finances, previous income and expenditure, trends and investments, and we come up with suggestions to take to the Trustees, which the Treasurer then passes on at Board meetings. It is, of course, the Board who have the final say on these. Checking budgets is about making sure that expenditure is in line with our aims, specifically those of linking and supporting teachers and helping them develop, and with our other charitable goals.

In practice, this means looking at IATEFL's general and Conference budgets, which are prepared by Head Office, and giving feedback on them. It also means, along with SIG Representative Judith



Colin Mackenzie is an English teacher and programme manager at IMT Atlantique, an engineering school in the west of France. His current interests are teacher identity and motivation, using anecdotes in the classroom and the IATEFL finances.

Mader, going through about 30 or 40 SIG budgets a year and pointing out where we think there might be things that need clarifying; we are ably aided in this by Eleanor Baynham at Head Office.

Finance staff and financial organisation

Of course, all the day-to-day work is done at Head Office in Faversham. IATEFL's financial structure is particularly complex. For a start, the organisation is made up of both a trading company and a charity, with the surplus of the trading company gift-aided to the charity at the year end.

As a charity, we hold three categories of funds: restricted funds, which are related to specific scholarships or projects, with the money not being able to be used for any other purpose; designated funds, which have been set aside to provide financing for specific projects or commitments; and general funds, which can be used for the overall running of the organisation.

Every time there is any expenditure or income, the Finance team has to allocate it to the appropriate fund, and this can be very complicated. Come audit time, which for us means in time for us to present the accounts at our April AGM, Head Office manages the preparation of our yearly accounts, which takes a significant amount of time and expertise. Ensuring

that charities are fully compliant with financial and statutory regulations has become very demanding in recent years.

Time for a change

As with the majority of Trustee and Executive Committee positions, the Treasurer's tenure is three years, renewable once. I will be coming to the end of my six years next April, and a call for candidates for the new Treasurer will be going out soon. The role obviously doesn't require being a trained accountant, but it is important to have a facility and interest in financial management, as well as a clear understanding of the various components that make up IATEFL and how they work together.

If this has whetted your appetite, and you think you might like to stand for Treasurer or for a position on the Finance Committee and you would like further information, please feel free to get in touch.

Hard work and dedication

To conclude, I would like to say that if IATEFL is in such good financial health and able to fund the myriad activities we are involved in around the world, it is in great part thanks to the hard work and dedication of the people mentioned above: Head Office staff, members of the Finance Committee and countless other volunteers. Any financial errors or misjudgements are, of course, the fault of the Treasurer – and that's why this is an important job.

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Keynote: Good teaching is good teaching, whatever the subject

Briony Beaven compares language teaching to dance instruction

As an ELT teacher, teacher educator and consultant, I love language. Words seem to be the mainstay of my life, not only professionally but also in my spare time when I try to improve my French, go out with and talk to friends, send WhatsApps, post on Facebook, watch TV drama, and read novels and magazines.

However, my dance aerobics lessons, three times a week, are a complete change. What is dance aerobics? It's a cardio workout that raises the heart rate and strengthens the muscles, and in which participants learn and do a choreographed routine. It's fast and furious, and it requires a sound working memory for movements, and, ideally, good mind-body coordination. We dance alone, without a partner, but of course everyone is doing (or trying to do!) the same steps at the same time. In a fitness studio, where such classes take place, there is a choice of classes, so I have attended classes with many different dance teachers.

At first, one might expect there to be nothing in common between teaching these classes and what we do when teaching English, or what those of us who are teacher trainers look for when observing English teachers. After all, in a dance class, there are very few words used – not by the teacher, and not by the participants. However, thinking about three excellent dance teachers whose classes I have attended made me change my mind. Now I see many similarities between a good dance class and a good English

“ I come away from the ‘good’ dance lessons feeling energised, successful and motivated to return to the teacher’s next lesson. I come away from the ‘poor’ dance lessons feeling annoyed, frustrated and vowing never again to attend a lesson with that teacher. ”



Dr Briony Beaven is a language teaching consultant, teacher educator and materials writer. She is a NILE Affiliate Teacher Trainer and has worked with teachers around the world. Briony is also a Cambridge Teaching Awards Delta tutor, assessor and moderator.

lesson or good ELT teacher training session. Of course, there are manuals for novice teachers of English describing how to teach well (Brown 2014; Harmer 2015; Scrivener 2011), and a number of accounts of what constitutes expertise in English teaching are available (Berliner 1995; Tsui 2009). But perhaps it would be refreshing to look at teaching our subject from a different angle, by examining the elements of successful dance teaching and considering whether they might apply to English teaching. Let's take Gianni's lessons; Gianni is an anonymised composite, representing the characteristics and behaviours of my three excellent dance teachers.

The dance lesson

Gianni is confident and focused. He seems to know what is going to happen from the minute he arrives in the dance studio. Firstly, Gianni says hello to everybody and checks his music and the sound system. Then he leads the participants in a warm-up routine, consisting of simple dance steps; he times this, and it never goes on for more than five minutes. The warm-up steps are similar but never exactly the same from lesson to lesson.

Gianni invites everyone to take a quick drink of water, and after this, he begins to

teach us the first part of the dance routine for this lesson. The water break acts as a signal that we are about to move from the warm-up into the new choreography. He demonstrates the steps and gets us to copy them, to rehearse. If there is a difficult step, he will walk it out very slowly while we watch. We do the step with him and then we do it again, faster. Sometimes Gianni teaches us the sequence of foot movements before turning them into proper steps. Sometimes he gets us to copy the arm movements while standing still, and only afterwards to do them simultaneously with the foot movements. We practise the steps to music at least twice.

Then Gianni says, 'Part 2', and the same procedure is followed with the next set of steps. Now and again, he cracks a joke. He looks around the room regularly, and if he sees a person or few people who are getting something wrong, he moves near them for the next practice phase, so that they can see his movements clearly. We end the Part 2 stage of the lesson by practising Part 2, and then Gianni says, 'From the beginning' and we try to dance Parts 1 and 2 one after the other without a pause in the middle.

Now the next two or three parts of the routine are sequentially and individually demonstrated, rehearsed, practised and performed. Each new part of the routine is practised on its own and then as the final section to the dance, which is thus gradually built up from beginning to end. This *modus operandi* ensures recycling of what has been learned throughout the lesson. From time to time Gianni looks briefly at his watch. He keeps an eye on the participants' progress and success, or lack of it, and he repeats elements of the choreography when he deems it necessary. However, he is clearly aware that the lesson has a fixed end time



Dance lessons have a lot in common with English lessons.

and may move on while a small percentage of the class are not yet completely sure of the steps. Nevertheless, Gianni always includes two or three very short drink breaks; a little chatting takes place during the breaks, but participants quickly return to the dance floor, and Gianni makes sure he has eye contact with everyone before proceeding.

When he has taught all five or six parts of the choreography Gianni announces, 'Show Time'. He turns the music up, and increases the speed of the music. He gets everyone moving in a simple right, left, step, touch rhythm. He claps and gets the participants to clap along with him, and then comes the culmination and high point of the class – everyone does the dance two or three times, moving synchronically. Usually, there is a chorus of 'again' and often Gianni has allowed time for us to perform the dance once more.

The last part of the lesson consists of a three- to five-minute cooldown. This will be slower than the dance routine, very simple, and includes stretches as well as steps. It serves to change the pace, to produce a relaxed finish and to signal closure. Gianni tells us what he intends to plan for next time. His lessons include different dance styles and music genres, ranging from salsa and merengue-influenced Latin style, to hip-hop, to upbeat 1930s musical-type dances or current show-dance radio pop routines. When Gianni announces the type of dance he is going to teach us in the next lesson there are some big smiles and a few grimaces. He notices the grimaces and makes a positive comment about the upcoming dance. Finally, he says goodbye.

Similarities between a good dance lesson and a good English lesson

- It is apparent that the *lesson has been planned* and that the teacher knows what they and the participants should achieve by the end of the lesson.
- There is a short, *engaging lead-in*, which is slightly different each lesson.
- There is a *clear start* to the lesson and *transitions between stages are marked*.
- *New content is introduced in small chunks*.
- *New content is rehearsed* and then *practised*.
- *The teacher recycles and revises the new content* throughout the lesson.
- Near the end of the lesson there is an *opportunity for everyone to notice and demonstrate what they have learned* in a fun way.
- The teacher creates a *relaxed, pleasant but focused atmosphere*.
- The teacher is *aware of class response* and is *able and willing to adjust accordingly*.
- The teacher *notices all the individuals in the class and teaches the whole class, not*

just the strongest learners.

- On the other hand, *every class has its own group dynamic. The teacher quickly works out what this particular class needs and wants.*
- The lesson is taught with *confidence and enthusiasm*.
- The lessons are *varied* and *cater for different learning preferences*.
- *Technical equipment is managed competently* and without fuss.
- *Timing is managed well* so that everything fits in.
- There is a short and simple *cool-down activity at the end of the lesson* to provide closure.
- The teacher *encourages participants to attend and look forward to the following lesson* by briefly presenting its content in a very positive way.
- The *teacher notices when a lesson was too challenging* for the participants and *choreographs a slightly less demanding dance routine for the next lesson*.

“... perhaps it would be refreshing to look at teaching our subject from a different angle, by examining the elements of successful dance teaching and considering whether they might apply to English teaching.”

Bad dance lessons and bad English lessons

- Unfortunately, not all dance teachers are like my favourite three. It might result in quite a depressing read to give you a blow-by-blow account of one of the disappointing dance lessons I have attended, but a quick survey of the problems shows us, I would suggest, some of the behaviours we would be wise to avoid in our English teaching. Every unsuccessful or incompetent lesson is, of course, differently unsuccessful or incompetent, but these are some key features of dance lessons I haven't enjoyed:
- *The lesson was badly planned or unplanned*, leading to over-long warm-ups and a confused or entirely unmarked move from warm-up to choreographed routine. Non-planning or possibly lack of internalising the choreography was also evident when the teacher kept everyone waiting before moving on to the next set of steps or changed the steps mid-lesson, often with a lot of 'stream of consciousness' self-talk from the teacher during their in-lesson decision processes.
 - The teacher had *poor classroom*

management skills. The lesson had a fuzzy, unclear beginning. At no time was it clear whether the dance routine consisted of different parts or which part we were currently practising. There was no focus on what had been learned in the lesson. In fact, poor timing sometimes meant that the routine wasn't completed and the lesson simply stopped mid-action when the teacher noticed that it was time to end.

- The teacher had *poor practical pedagogical knowledge* and was unable, for example, to teach a routine that matched the timing of the chosen music or to put together a routine appropriate to the level of the class.
- The teacher *failed to create rapport or a feeling of cohesion* among class members. There was little contact between the teacher and the participants and only anxious glances from participant to participant.

It was interesting to notice how much difference the pedagogical competence or otherwise of the dance teachers made to my experience as a learner. I come away from the 'good' dance lessons feeling energised, successful and motivated to return to the teacher's next lesson. I come away from the 'poor' dance lessons feeling annoyed, frustrated and vowing never again to attend a lesson with that teacher. Do non-specialist participants also notice the quality of the teaching – in dance and in English? It would seem so, judging from my dance experiences, since as 'just a participant' I hear all the reactions. The reactions are normally, as you would expect, expressed in generalised and lay language but are clearly the same as mine. Gianni gets 'That was really fun', 'See you next week' or 'Great'. The teachers whose lessons I haven't enjoyed got 'Useless', 'That was a waste of time' or 'I'm not going to him/her again'. It appears that there is much in common between good lessons in any subject.

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Teaching students to make in-class presentations

Tim Thompson provides a step-by-step guide to teaching presentation skills

Last month I visited my daughter's school for the open class day. The teacher explained that the kids had been writing poems, and they would now come one by one to the front of the class and read their poems. As a presentation skills trainer who works with university students and businesspeople, it was very interesting for me to be reminded how speaking in front of the class works at the primary school level.

To be honest, it went about how you would expect. Every student dragged their feet as they walked slowly to the front of the room and mumbled their way through their poems. Only one student used a loud, energetic voice (and received the warmest applause). Several students hid behind their papers. It was like torture, and they wanted it to end as soon as possible. It was easy to see that they weren't prepared and, thus, had very little confidence.

That is where many teachers miss the mark when it comes to having students stand at the front of the room to share their work. They ask their students to do something but provide no training on how to do it properly. The kids are just thrown into the fire, and then their biggest mistakes are pointed out in front of their peers (and in the case of my daughter's school, their parents, too). So, what do teachers need to make sure their students know about speaking in front of a group before asking them to try it? Let's look at the process in five steps.

“ How do we want the audience to change after hearing our presentation, assuming they start at Point A? It then becomes the speaker's job to take the audience members from Point A to Point B. ”



Tim Thompson is a communications consultant based in South Korea. Before founding Archer Consulting in 2016, he was a university lecturer for 15 years teaching presentation skills and Business English courses.

Step 1. Topic selection

Whenever possible, it's a good idea to let the students talk about something they are already familiar with. During the topic brainstorming process, this is the 'Why me?' question. Students need to ask themselves why they are the right person to talk about that topic. In a university course, they might choose to introduce three fun things to do in their hometown. Hopefully, they know more about their own hometown than the other students in the class. The second question to ask is, 'Why you?' How will this information benefit the audience? Why should they pay attention? Simply put, why should they care? For the above-mentioned case, the speaker could tell their classmates that they want to make sure anyone who visits has a good time. Now the audience is thinking, 'Yes, I would want to enjoy my visit there. I'll pay attention.'

In my daughter's class, the content was a poem that the students wrote, so the 'Why me?' was their unique feelings about the assigned theme: spring. It was the 'Why you?' that was the real challenge. Would they be able to share some emotion that might touch the other students through their words?

Step 2. Choice of styles and outcomes

After the students have either been assigned a topic or chosen one that is a good match for both themselves and their classmates, they need to select a category. Most presentations fall into one of three categories: informative, persuasive or sales. Next, they must think about what they want the goal to be. Some people call that a Point B. How do we want the audience to change after hearing our presentation, assuming they start at Point A? It then becomes the speaker's job to take the audience members from Point A to Point B.

Step 3. Collection and organisation of data

The big decision here is whether or not to use class time for data collection. If you only have a small amount of contact time with each class, then it might be better assigned as homework. You also need to consider whether the students need to get information from the Internet or if they can use their own knowledge and experiences.

Once the students have collected a sufficient amount of information, it's time to determine the order of the subtopics. When organising content, the magic number is usually three. Think of a traditional, in-class presentation like a five-paragraph essay. There is an introduction, three body paragraphs and a conclusion. In an informative presentation students can give three examples, and in a persuasive presentation they can give three reasons. Remember to tell the students to hide their weakest example in the middle so they don't leave the audience with a poor first or last impression when sharing their content.

Regarding presentation time, I prefer a four-minute presentation. This allows around 30 seconds for an introduction, one minute per example or reason, and another 30 seconds for a conclusion. For younger learners this might need to be reduced.

Step 4. Practice and skill building

Now we move on to the practice stage. This is especially important when students are using a second language and need more practice time to feel comfortable sharing their content. Practice should take place in three stages.

The first stage is working in groups of three to five students. Here, they put their desks together, sit in a circle and take turns sharing their content. During this stage, they should focus on making eye contact with their group members and hitting their time goal. Ask the group members to tell the speaker if they felt that their eye contact was insufficient. If students have their own mobile phones (and if they are permitted in the class), the timer app can be used to check the finishing time for each presentation. When reciting a poem, there likely wouldn't be a time goal, and eye contact wouldn't be as important, since students are usually reading their written work; these, however, would be the skills to focus on for a more traditional presentation.

“Several students hid behind their papers. It was like torture, and they wanted it to end as soon as possible.”

The second stage is the same as the first, but when it is their turn, the speaker stands up at their desk and addresses the group members from a different eye level. This makes a big difference in terms of the presenter's comfort level. My students tell me that standing up is much harder but that they appreciate the opportunity to practise sharing their information a second time. It helps them refine what they want to say, and they usually manage their time better during the second stage. This is also a good time to address any distracting delivery issues such as bouncing from one foot to another or putting their arms in awkward positions. When you notice something distracting, write it on the board so everyone can learn about it and the guilty parties are not as self-conscious.

Finally, it's time to debut their talk from the front of the room. By now, the students have practised (at least) twice in a less stressful environment and can use the tools and training they have been given to help them focus on achieving the goals of their talk.

Step 5. Assessment and feedback

The first thing I'd like to say about assessment is that you should make sure the students' first presentation in front of

the class is *not* one that you are scoring. Feedback is helpful, but don't give them a score that will affect their grade that term. They need to practise in this high-stress environment first.

Now, let's move on to what we are assessing. Many textbooks that explicitly teach presentation skills will have a long checklist for assessing presentations. The problem with long checklists and wordy rubrics is that the teacher is often looking down at the checklist more than they are looking up at the speaker. I prefer a more holistic form of scoring that assigns five points each to three categories: preparation, delivery and content.

Preparation elements include managing their speaking time, being familiar with the venue and any technology that will be used, being familiar with their content and making sure their visuals are error-free.

Delivery elements include eye contact and eye rotation (looking at different areas of the room), speaking volume and speed, body language that isn't distracting, and a good energy level.

Content elements include making sure the topic and content match the audience, making sure they have enough information to accomplish their goal in the given time, making sure the content flows together appropriately, and using an appropriate vocabulary level for the audience.

Points can be deducted from each category for repeated and severe mistakes, such as pauses that are too long, typos on slides and going well over or under the assigned presentation time. Try to be as consistent as possible with your deductions.

“... you should make sure the students' first presentation in front of the class is not one that you are scoring. Feedback is helpful, but don't give them a score that will affect their grade that term.”

Another assessment tip is to record each presentation if you can so that you can play it back for a student who questions their score. That being said, it's better to give feedback right after the presentation ends while it's fresh in everyone's mind. Give the feedback orally and use it to reinforce the tips you gave during the first and second rounds of practice to help the entire class improve.

Many teachers give their students opportunities to speak in front of the class, but very few of them use the entire term to slowly build their students' public speaking competency. Different teachers will value different aspects of presentations, and that is to be expected. The key is to take the time to teach your students that speaking in front of a group of people doesn't have to be scary; you just need to know what you're doing.

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Speaking in front of the class doesn't have to be scary.

Using technology to develop 21st-century skills

Rania Jabr uses technology for teaching and assessment

Introduction

Why do our students stop learning? I have often wondered! I have asked many of them, and I have heard responses, such as 'I feel I am not making progress', 'I am too busy with ...', 'I am not connecting with other students' or 'There is not enough time before the finals'. One common concern is assessment. Are we going about things in the wrong way? Are we inadvertently alienating our students with outdated assessment methods? These questions highlight the need to select technology tools carefully to create a framework of tasks with a view to not only engaging students but also increasing their independence and responsibility for their own learning. Assessment is ongoing and is embedded within each task.

21st-century tools

Collaboration, communication, problem solving and critical thinking are essential skills for today's language learners if they hope to compete in both academics and the workplace. Added to this, reflection and presentation skills using technology are essential abilities. These 21st-century skills can only be evaluated using an ongoing form of assessment (Voogt *et al.* 2013).

With the advent of technology, the cursor has replaced the pencil, and the delete key has replaced the eraser. Educators are faced with the dilemma of using traditional teaching tools or adopting new tech tools in their classes. Today's students are extremely comfortable with technology – digital natives who depend on e-tools in their daily lives – while their teachers may be digital immigrants, in many cases, still not completely comfortable with technology. According to Saavedra and Opfer (2012), much-needed 21st-century skills should be taught using tech tools; the sooner we educators come to terms with

“ ... 21st-century skills should be taught using tech tools; the sooner we educators come to terms with this major shift in teaching and learning, the better. ”



Rania Jabr is a Senior Instructor II at AUC, Egypt. A conference presenter, teacher trainer, journal reviewer and editor with a particular interest in teaching reading and writing and materials development, she presents at international conferences and has published in numerous journals.

this major shift in teaching and learning, the better.

Why use technology?

Our students need to become problem solvers (Li and Kim 2016), and this requires additional skills, such as establishing group goals, interacting and collaborating. These skills are essential in achieving learning outcomes, monitoring progress and analysing peer feedback to ensure consistent improvement. With technology, it is easier to develop these competencies, as technology facilitates learning and creates students who are less reliant on their teachers. Technology makes a positive contribution to class dynamics since learning is manipulated and adapted to suit the pace of individual students. As an interactive, engaging and collaborative tool, technology is ideal for creating formative assessment tasks. However, technology is not a 'cure all' for language learning problems. Its success as a teaching/learning tool is dependent on us teachers since we are the designers of the learning framework or experiences in our own classrooms for which we use technology.

There are various ways of retaining what is learned: a) hearing; b) hearing and reading; c) hearing, reading and speaking; and d) hearing, reading, speaking and doing. This final element – 'doing' something while learning a language – is the key to retaining information (Arslan and Tanis 2018). Such simple but highly effective academic tasks, like doing online research, sharing information orally and visually through presentations, and giving multi-media presentations, are different ways to retain information via the direct implementation of technology tools. Figure 1 shows some suggested tools and the skills the technology mainly supports.

Digital citizenship

The creation of digital citizens within our

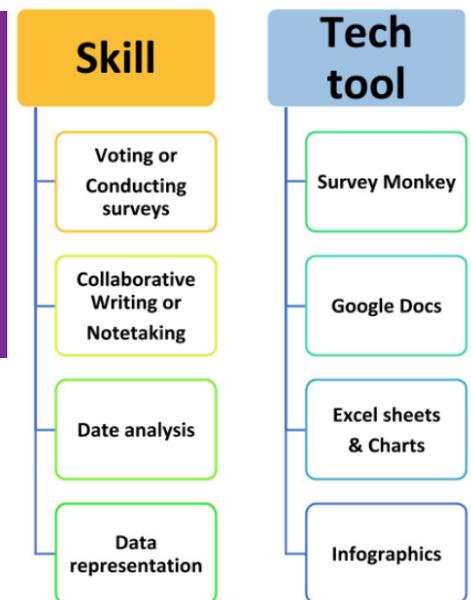


Figure 1: Suggested technology tools to develop specific skills

classes requires a triangulated approach. Primarily, we need to create a paperless classroom in which information is mainly shared online. This is followed by training our students to become digitally literate, so they can adhere to agreed-upon online codes of conduct, maintain their health and wellness online, and ensure their data is secure.

Finally, we need to teach our students digital etiquette. This includes raising awareness of both their rights and responsibilities in the digital world. Educators cannot assume that since their students are active on social media, they can function, interact and protect themselves online. Carefully introducing our students to the fundamentals of online engagement is a first step toward survival online. This is a prerequisite to the next step of beginning their learning online.

Data-driven learning

In the 21st century, a student-centred class is a must (Dole *et al.* 2016). The shaping of this class begins by creating a questioning culture, where the teacher acts as a moderator. Peer teaching is front and centre; thus, peer assessment and group feedback replace traditional assessment methods and tools. Students are engaged in problem-solving tasks, which require them to report their findings visually using mind-maps or graphic organisers. Checklists, tables, graphs, pie charts, collages and infographics can all be used to provide evidence of ongoing student learning. Creating podcasts,

mp3s and video recordings are also possible out-of-the-box tasks. Our students' phones are the teacher's most valuable media tool. A smart phone is a student's best friend in the classroom and should become our best friend, too. With their phones, students can use a dictionary, access an audio or video recorder and experience multi-media content; a wealth of information is within our students' reach. Added to this, social media and countless free apps and sites are excellent tools to bridge the gap between *knowing* and *doing* in language learning.

In the tech age, both teaching and formative assessment can be done using our students' smart phones. Students' 'we have no time' argument can be easily addressed. I give my students an offer they cannot refuse: I only ask for five or ten minutes of their busy schedules to Google a video about anything that interests them. I ask them to watch this video, summarise what they saw the next day in class and then share their reaction with their peers. As a follow-up activity, they can record their experience or share it in a written reflection.

Out-of-the-box tasks

Here are some of my favourite tools and approaches:

- Creating a class Facebook page has become a necessity as it creates a sense of community and a non-threatening learning environment. It complements any educator's effort to establish rapport and ensure student bonding. It is a fast and easy mode for communication, peer teaching and learning since it supplements face-to-face learning. I use it to showcase my students' work and ask their peers to add comments and feedback. In order to create our class Facebook page, students vote for and select a name for the class page. I create the page and ensure it is set as 'private'. Students sign up and join. This safe environment encourages mutual learning and allows my students to learn online etiquette and expectations.
- My students discuss a different topic in class each week; it is part of the overall theme we address for three or four weeks. In the process, I create a class podcast. In our discussion circles and our fishbowl activities, students learn to ask questions, take turns, lead the discussion and critique an argument. I ask them to record these sessions, select those they prefer, upload them onto our Facebook page and invite comments from their peers.
- Since we are usually pressed for time in our classes and writing needs much practice, I introduced the idea of shared writing using Google Docs. Students co-construct written texts in groups of four. With a class of 16 students, we have four complete essays to share on

our class Facebook page. I assign four different essay questions, all dealing with the theme or module we are currently studying, in order to cover different angles. In each group, one student writes the introduction, another writes the first body paragraph, a third writes the second body paragraph, and the fourth writes the conclusion. This is all done in real time using one shared Google document. As the first student writes, their peers can offer ideas and suggestions, and even edit errors. I monitor their progress, but I give my feedback and correction only after completion of the essays and before posting them online.

- Reflection is a natural progression from the initial teacher-planned action and the 'doing' of the task by the students. The teacher can use reflection to assess student progress; students can also use it to 'own' their learning. I ask my students to reflect on each task we do, giving them such questions as 'What did you learn?', 'How did you tackle this task?', 'What is your confidence level in your answers?', and 'What should you do next?'
- I love infographics. I use them to teach, to review and to encourage reflection. Students' end-of-course infographics incorporate feedback and reflection. I ask students to use pictures, links to sites and videos, screen shots, but no words. I call it a collage of their learning journey. These e-posters are then converted to pdfs and shared on the class Facebook page. To guide my students, I ask such questions as 'Which tasks were enjoyable?', 'How do you believe you performed in this class?', and 'What advice would you give future students about how to approach this class?'

Conclusion

Whether we should use technology in our classes is no longer the right question to ask. The question we should consider is how to use it to create tasks which are interesting, engaging and informative. Doing this would enable educators to assess their students' progress, give formative feedback and create autonomous learners who take responsibility for their own learning and monitor their own progress.

Ongoing assessment is part and parcel of learning. If student progress is placed on a continuum, the signposts for actual learning taking place can only be indicated based on formative assessment tasks, not by a one-time final exam.

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Spring Summer Autumn

What in the name of TEFL! Onomasiologico-pedagogical ponderings

Deak Kirkham ponders the creation of adjectives from names

The balcony scene

'What's in a name?' ponders Juliet in Act II Scene 2 of the famous Shakespearean crowd-pleaser before launching into a short monologue on roses and their odour, and the significance of the family name of her beloved. Both the term 'rose' and the family name 'Montague' are names, but of a slightly different flavour, the former being a regular noun, the latter being a proper name. And, although both may be part of the discipline of onomasiology, the study of names, it is this latter phenomenon – the proper name, along with its linguistic properties and its pedagogical potential – that is the subject of this short article.

There is much in a name in English, and of course other languages, but this article will focus on adjectives formed from proper names (e.g. 'Dickensian deprivation') regarding which we'll consider what linguistic affordances proper names offer and suggest a couple of onomasiological pedagogies for the EFL classroom.

Proper adjectives

English is replete with adjectives derived from names. These can be classified in various ways, for example by the type of source as in Table 1.

As this table indicates, certain adjectives derived from proper names have lost their capital letter, a reflection of the fact that their origin is somewhat more



As he kayaks down the transcontinental river of life, **Deak Kirkham** occasionally paddles shoreward to renew his engagement with such pastimes as the satire of linguistics or, with a heavier heart, the well-dressed but slightly disoriented elderly gentleman that is the Esperanto movement.

Source type	Examples
Historical personages	Victorian squalor, Dickensian deprivation, Socratic dialogue, Churchillian rhetoric
Mythical / fictional entities	Narcissistic mentality, mercurial political agenda, quixotic, erotic literature
Places	Olympic achievement, Trojan betrayal, Roman longevity
Groups / races	Spartan dress, Pythonesque humour, epicurean pizza-fest, stoic determination, European intransigence

Table 1: Proper adjectives

of interest itself, particularly when we consider the cultural underpinnings of these proper adjectives (on which more in a moment).

If capitalisation, an issue for many English language learners, is exemplified and illustrated by proper adjectives, it is not the only pedagogically relevant linguistic construct which proper adjectives exhibit. Another construct is the degree of polysemy inherent in the adjective. Polysemy arises when a lexeme (e.g. 'head') manifests a plurality of different meanings which nevertheless instantiate a cognitive network. Thus while 'the head of the body' may be the default or prototype meaning, related meanings such as 'the head of the pass' and the 'head of the organisation' arise.

The adjective 'Dickensian' can be seen as polysemous. It refers most naturally to the writings of Charles Dickens and their pre-occupation with poverty and social justice. However, a 'Dickensian Christmas festival' (Google attested) does not imply that the festival will be marked by a tenor of deprivation; rather, here, we seem to evoke the period (or even a romanticised view of the period) to which Dickens belonged. Indeed, in the right context, such as a gathering of Dickens scholars, patterns such as a 'Dickensian life' meaning one of social non-conformity might arise or 'Dickensian productivity' referencing his prodigious output.

Another example of proper adjectival polysemy might be 'titanic' derived from the mythical entities the Titans. This could be read as polysemous between 'very big' and 'disastrous'. Other proper adjectives, however, such as 'stoic', seem to me to be monosemous.

A third linguistically significant aspect of these proper adjectives is that they vary in relation to each other in terms of collocational range. Certain proper adjectives have very limited collocational range. 'Socratic' applies easily to 'argument', 'method' and 'dialectic' (all drawn from a similar semantic field) as well as surfacing in the complex adjective 'pre-Socratic'. 'Pythonesque' applies to 'humour' and 'deadpan' but not much else. However, 'Elizabethan' seems to have



Juliet's balcony in Verona, Italy

a much wider range: Elizabethan age, literature, collar, theatre, architecture, reforms, stability and others. This seems to be again a function of flexibility of the cultural concept which the word arises from: it is the richness of the Elizabethan age that imbues 'Elizabethan' with collocational range.

Yet another feature of these patterns is their prosodic features as affixes to a root. Consider the four different affix patterns below.

-ic: Davidic, Homeric
 -isian: Dionysian, Cartesian
 -ite: Thatcherite, Blairite
 -esque: Daliesque, Dantesque

With the exception of the third example, which seems to connote a particular interpretation of a political philosophy or adherence thereto, these adjective endings are semantically as hodge-podge as any 'set' of English affixes. However, semantics aside, they do demonstrate an important prosodic bifurcation in English affixation, namely that certain affixes such as '-esque' (or '-ness' to take a noun-forming suffix) leave the phonetics and prosody of the stem unchanged: 'Dali' does not change either in its segmental phonetic realisation or its stress pattern. By contrast, other suffixes such as '-ic' and '-isian' do change the stress and phonetics: 'HOM-er' (as in 'home-er') becomes 'hu-MER-ic'. Stress shift and phonetics are part and parcel of the learner challenge regarding English suffixes; names provide a perhaps memorable domain in which to explore this.

In the classroom

Given the above comments on the linguistic (and cultural) affordances of proper adjectives, it seems not unreasonable to suggest that there is teaching-learning potential in this part of the system. Let us therefore turn to this. A first pedagogical resonance is simply in the illustrative potential these forms have of many linguistic concepts that are of interest to language teaching (stress patterns, collocation, connotation, polysemy, etc.). Of course, these properties can be illustrated from many other sources. However, the microcosm of proper adjectives to my mind offers a neatly

“ *proper adjectives have linguistic significance that is relevant to English language learning and ... can be part of our teaching.* ”

circumscribed and thought-provoking world in which to unpack some of these linguistic realities – which can, of course, then be immediately further illustrated with non-proper adjective patterns in the language.

In a more concrete and activity-style vein, proper names, by virtue of their culturally embedded and emergent origins, offer affordances for scaffolded mini-research projects and presentations. Students might be given a figure of world history or mythology (or indeed a place or grouping of people as per Table 1) who has bequeathed us a proper adjective in English. After a) reading about the source of the adjective through online sources, and b) studying the form, meaning(s) and use(s) and proper adjective itself (perhaps scaffolded by the activity outlined above), each student may be asked to give a short two-part presentation on the individual and the usage of the adjective, and in so doing, make reference to what might be called the 4Cs of the activity: cultural origin and significance, connotations, collocational range, and cross-linguistic relevance (i.e. whether the adjective is used in a similar way in the student's L1). This is a complete, stand-alone activity, which brings together cultural and linguistic aspects of proper adjectives in a research and presentation context.

Another session-length activity focuses on creativity. Students are invited to create a possible proper adjectival form of their own name, along with its prosody, what nouns it can modify attributively and what it connotes. Here's an example: Proper adjective: 'Kirkhamian', or its variant: 'Kirkhamic'

Pronunciation: 'kirk-HAM-ian' (as in 'shame'), or its variant 'Kirk-HAM-ic' (as in 'ham')

Connotations: a slightly obsessive, neurotically tinged approach to life, specifically the life of the mind, marked by an intellectual pre-occupation with the minutiae of esoteric and ostensibly remote areas of intellectual exploration; an inability to stop thinking – and stop thinking about thinking.

Usage examples with appropriate nouns:

for most PhD students, the early phases are marked by a 'Kirkhamian orientation', but by the end of the first year, most candidates have settled into their project.

adolescence has recently been conceptualised as a 'Kirkhamian phase' of maturation, out of which most individuals emerge fully by the mid-20s.

“ *... proper names, by virtue of their culturally embedded and emergent origins, offer affordances for scaffolded mini-research projects and presentations.* ”

This productive, ludic activity brings together in a fun way the relatively serious threads of the proper adjective analyses above.

Concluding thoughts

This short article has looked at a selection of the linguistic bits and bobs and pedagogical reflexes that hang around proper names. And to be honest, we've not achieved (or in fairness attempted) comprehensiveness: there's stuff to explore around titles (including the important new English language title 'Mx'), cross cultural similarities and differences between the nature/ ordering of names, and the intriguing phenomenon of mononymy. Let us not forget, moreover, the occasional deverbally abstract noun which surfaces in English from a proper noun. Examples include the pejorative 'McDonaldisation' made famous by George Ritzer and the more recent 'plutoisation' stemming from the demotion of the celestial body Pluto from planet to plutoid. Perhaps there's pedagogical potential in these aspects of names as well, but not in the context of this article.

Neither of course have we answered Juliet's semantico-philosophical question in the title of this piece (although as I ponder the typical emotional landscape of the teenage years, I feel little sense of intellectual accountability to a besotted adolescent with butterflies in her stomach, who's disturbing the neighbours in the middle of the night shouting pretentious rubbish at a boyfriend whom her parents consider unsuitable).

What we have done is demonstrate that proper adjectives have linguistic significance that is relevant to English language learning and that, as such, they can be part of our teaching. It might not be a titanic or gigantic insight, and little use has been made of either Chomskyan or Hallidayan frameworks, but I hope it's been sufficiently IATEFL Voician, and as such, entertaining, informative and useful.

Holding the door for older learners

Heloisa Duarte gives advice for working with older learners

Have you ever heard the proverb that ‘teachers open the door, but you must enter by yourself’? In my understanding, this proverb refers to the fact that students must do their part in the learning process and that teachers cannot perform miracles in order to make learners learn. However, some students need more than just knowing the door is open; they need to be reassured that they belong in that place and that they are welcome to enter and stay there. It goes beyond motivation, and it is especially true when we talk about older learners.

Closed doors

We are exposed to ageist stereotypes from early childhood. We unconsciously learn that as we age, we become forgetful, frail, inept, and physically and mentally weak, among other unfair stereotypes. That comes to us through cartoons, films, fairy tales, books and even through conversations and comments we hear as children. As we grow older, we tend to internalise that kind of bias and to replicate those comments and behaviours without even thinking about them. According



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to Levy (2009: 333), ‘When negative age stereotypes are encountered by individuals before they are directed at themselves, there is unlikely to be a felt need to mount defences against them; hence, susceptibility is maximized’.

The result of a lifetime spent receiving and repeating ageist comments is that when we reach old age, we are prone to believe them, which may result in low self-esteem and lack of self-confidence. These are some of the threats older learners face when they come into our classrooms.

Another common threat that comes as a result of those mentioned above is known as the stereotype threat, which is defined by Steele (1997: 614) as ‘the social-psychological threat that arises when one is in a situation or doing something for which a negative stereotype about one’s group applies’.

According to them, when someone is under the stereotype threat, they fear they might

“ We unconsciously learn that as we age, we become forgetful, frail, inept, and physically and mentally weak... ”

be negatively stereotyped, judged or treated stereotypically by their peers or, even worse, they fear the prospect of confirming the stereotype.

When we consider that many older learners have been away from formal educational environments for some time before they engage in a language course, it is easy to understand they may feel threatened by the ageist stereotypes concerning their abilities to learn. Some of the possible outcomes of this threat suggested by Steele are as follows:

- **Domain avoidance.** This happens when an individual wants to do something (in this case, learn a language) but says it is not for them, that they are too old for that. Usually, these students don’t even come to us, or if they do, they drop out after the first lessons.
- **Self-handicapping.** This is a strategy in which the student pre-empts the negative evaluative consequences of performing



Older students face special challenges (Photo: Iakov Filimonov, Shutterstock)

poorly in a stereotype-threatening domain. This is usually an unconscious process and learners who react to the stereotype threat this way tend to skip classes for no apparent reason, avoid participation in class, and not do any homework. They act like this in order to be able to blame their poor results on their own actions, and not on their assumed age-related disabilities.

■ **Counter-stereotypic behaviour.** Another common response to the stereotype threat is to try to disprove the relevance of the negative stereotype through counter-stereotypic behaviour. Those learners who try and memorise every single word you say and all the lexis from each and every lesson, and those who answer all the questions and want to take part in all activities, sometimes not even giving their colleagues the chance to participate, might be using the counter-stereotypic behaviour strategy. Although this strategy may sound ideal, it may cause some problems: because it works in the short run, in a single setting, the use of this strategy means that any change in the setting, such as new teachers, groups or colleagues, may lead learners to re-encounter the stereotype and have to re-win their exemption from it all over again.

■ **Disengagement.** This is a short-term psychological adjustment to stereotype threat that involves weakening the dependence of the learner's self-views and views of their abilities on their performance. This is usually the 'I don't care' attitude. Although disengagement and domain avoidance may seem similar, and they are to some measure, the main difference is that in disengagement the learner keeps in contact with the domain, that is, the learner neither quits the course nor listens to or cares for feedback.

Of course, it is crucial to point out that not all older learners feel this threat, as well as the fact that this is not a threat that affects only them.

What lies at our door

There are many ways through which we can prevent all these threats from reaching older learners. To start with, we must understand and challenge our own biases toward older adults. What comes to your mind when you think of them? What stereotypes guide your perception? It is only natural to think in terms of stereotypes about groups of which we are not part or with whom we do not have much contact, so do not feel bad about

“ ... the number of older learners in our classrooms will increase, and we must be ready for them. ”

it. Levy and Banaji (2002: 51) explain that 'the mental processes and behaviours that show sensitivity to age as an attribute are automatically produced in the everyday thoughts and feelings, judgments and decisions'. The most important attitude here is to acknowledge the stereotypes (if any) that may guide your perception and challenge them.

After considering your own attitudes concerning older learners, it might be a good idea to try to understand their needs and wants. One way you can do this is by putting together a needs analysis and asking them to fill it in. I usually find this quite useful, not only with older learners but with all my adult learners. The use of this resource can help you understand your learners' likes and dislikes, as well as their goals and motivation level, their preferences in terms of classroom activities, their time available for homework, and even their hobbies, favourite songs, series, books or films. You can choose the areas you want to investigate and use a few minutes of the first lesson to have them fill it in. I usually use a mix of open-ended and multiple-choice questions so as not to use much of the lesson time. The information you get from conducting this kind of analysis is invaluable not only because it will help you throughout the course when planning your lessons, but also because you will make your learners feel you are genuinely interested in them.

When you have all the information about your learners' needs, wants, likes and dislikes, it is time to prepare the next lessons. While doing so, it is good to keep in mind that concrete tasks with a usable application can lead to better results with older learners. According to Guglielman (2012: 5), courses designed for older learners should 'be developed taking into account learner's priorities, motivation, learning needs, learning requests, previous knowledge, previous learning experiences, previous competences, and potential areas of development'. She also suggests that the course should be 'oriented towards an experience focused on themes and problems significantly connected to real life, useful and usable in daily practice' (2012: 5). She goes on to say that courses for older adults should focus more on themes and problems instead of contents and disciplines, adopting a more situational approach than a theoretical one.

It is also important to keep in mind that one of the factors that might hinder learners' performance is a high affective filter. As I mentioned before, older learners may come to your classroom feeling they do not belong there and that they will not be able to learn. This is especially true

“ ... we must understand and challenge our own biases toward older adults. What comes to your mind when you think of them? What stereotypes guide your perception? ”

when we talk about mixed-age groups: comparisons with other (younger) learners' performances and fear of making mistakes and losing face in front of peers might prevent them from making the most of the course. It is crucial then that you help them feel welcome and at ease in your lessons in order to reduce anxiety and build their self-confidence.

Knocking on the future's door

Last but not least, we must come to terms with the fact that the world is getting older. The United Nations have recently released their 2019 *Revision of World Population Prospects*; the report points out that the global population aged 60 years or over was around 960 million in 2017 and is expected to double by 2050, when it is projected to reach nearly 2.1 billion. According to these projections, in 2030 we will have more older persons than children under the age of 10 globally, and by 2050 there will be more older persons aged 60 or over than adolescents and youth aged 10–24. Taking this information into consideration, it is of utmost importance that we start looking at older learners as the future in language teaching. I am not saying that children, teens and young adults will suddenly leave our courses or lessons, but the number of older learners in our classrooms will increase, and we must be ready for them.

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The organised teacher, part 2

Alex Fayle completes a two-part series on getting organised with some practical tips

Teaching is a chaotic profession by nature. Spread-out teaching schedules and the lure of collecting paper-based resources make it difficult to be organised. Yet, if we as teachers are not organised, our students, our employers and, most of all, our professional reputations suffer.

In the last issue of *Voices*, we looked at how without the self-awareness of knowing how you spend your time and what your current professional goals and objectives are, getting and more importantly staying organised becomes an impossible task. In other words, you need to know where you are and where you want to go if any permanent progress is going to happen.

In this second part of the series, we will look at how to move from where you are to where you want to be, in the simplest fashion possible. To me, the most basic form of personal and professional organisation comes down to a single concept: how to be efficiently lazy.

Efficient laziness

Lazy people try to get away with doing as little as possible. Efficiently lazy people, however, will do whatever it takes up front to succeed and grow doing as little as possible later. Efficiently lazy people also regularly question everything; 'because it's always been done that way' is never an acceptable answer.

This concept applies equally to time management as it does to physical organisation. Let's take my role as Academic Director as an example. One of my responsibilities is to ensure that all students end the school year at the same level. I could do this through regular classroom observations, teacher reports and so on, or I could set clear expectations and a standardised curriculum. By choosing the latter, I greatly reduce the time I need to commit to this responsibility while still maintaining quality control.

The same applies to resources. We used

“...if we as teachers are not organised, our students, our employers and, most of all, our professional reputations suffer.”



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to have bookshelves crammed into every available space in the academy, with books dating back to the early 90s, and binders full of photocopiable extra resources. Having made the decision, however, to apply the core principle of 'standardised content, customised delivery', most of those resources became obsolete, allowing me to donate and/or recycle the majority of the materials. Now, when I want to find something in the academy, I can usually do so in under five minutes because I've minimised the possible places to go look.

Constant questioning

When looking to organise your time, here are some questions you can ask yourself:

- Do I need to do this?
- Do I want to?
- What will be the worst outcome if I don't?
- If it's a repetitive task, is there a way of automating it or reducing the amount of time it takes me?
- Can I delegate it? Would it be more worth my while to pay someone else to do it?

Let's take a typical day for one of my teachers. Remember, the core belief at the academy is 'standardised content, customised delivery', and we also have a policy of reporting to parents daily via an online student management system.

In the previous article, we listed just some of the tasks that teachers need to complete. Let's apply the questions to each one. In looking at the answers, you can see that teachers at our academy have very little to do outside the classroom, meaning they can focus the majority of their energy on the students themselves.

- **Prep-time:** Look at the teacher's book before class and lay out the timing. At worst, if I don't do this and simply follow the teacher's book as the class goes on, the class may not go as smoothly as I might like it to. If I teach this level over several years, I can make notes of what works and what doesn't so as to reduce prep-time even further.
- **Resource research:** Much of this is provided, but if I want to add my own materials, I have very clear guidelines

to help me pick just the right task to supplement the textbook.

- **Curriculum development:** I don't need to do any of this. And if I want to, I should probably look for an academy with a different core belief.
- **Meetings:** As my Director has regular informal five-minute chats with me, I don't have to schedule time-consuming meetings.
- **Networking:** No need for this, and if I do it, it's more socialising than anything else.
- **Professional development:** There is no mandated need for this, but my Director encourages us to experiment in the classroom with materials provided by him and with our own. However, if I don't feel like doing it, there are no negative consequences.
- **Travel:** I've made the active choice not to teach business classes, so travel is minimal.
- **Administration and marking:** Most administrative tasks can be completed in the five minutes between classes and given that most homework is online, marking requirements are limited as well.

Applying the personal mission statement

Don't forget that your answers to the questions mentioned above should all tie back to your personal mission statement. In other words, your answers should focus on what's the most important to you at the moment. By focusing on your personal mission statement, you won't get distracted by 'should' or 'ought' or 'it's always done that way'.

And if you find that your personal mission statement conflicts with a lot of your tasks, perhaps it's time to give your life a deeper look – because, of course, when we do something we love in an environment where we feel safe and cared for, time seems to organise itself.

Physical minimalism

Paper, however, doesn't organise itself, no matter how clear we are about our goals. Maintaining an organised space requires constant vigilance and small regular tasks.

In the professional organising world, there are two types of organisers. The first type is naturally organised and can have on hand many resources, but these are so well categorised and stored that there is no clutter; everything can be found almost instantaneously. The second type of professional organiser is a chaotic person who has discovered the art of minimalism to maintain control over his or her

“... the most basic form of personal and professional organisation comes down to a single concept: how to be efficiently lazy.”

environment.

I am one of the latter types. For me, the best way to stay organised is to hold on to very little. For example, when I ran my own business, I didn't keep any sort of filing system. Everything related to running the business went into a plastic box marked with the year (after recording it in my accounting system, of course). If I ever needed to consult the archive, knowing it was all in that single box, it took next to no time to find it.

Getting minimally organised

If you are reading this article, it's unlikely you are either of these two types of organised person. But you would like to be, I'm sure. So, how does one get there?

Let's go back to the concept of efficiently lazy. The resources you have on hand should line up with your personal mission statement – but don't worry; you don't need to throw anything else out. Not right away, at least.

Here is the simplest way to get minimally

organised:

1. Get a box and label it with a summarised version of your personal mission statement.
2. Get another box and label it 'other resources'.
3. Set aside no more than 15 minutes a day (time yourself with your mobile phone) to go through papers.
4. Papers go into one of the two boxes, making the decision process simple. You're not getting rid of it and you're not faced with multiple choices.
5. When a box is full, date it, tape it shut and store it in one of two places:
 - a) If it's a personal mission box, it stays in your office.
 - b) If it's an 'other resource' box it goes into some sort of storage space (basement, attic, storage locker, etc.).
6. Add an alarm to your calendar for one year in the future.
7. When the alarm sounds, if you haven't opened the box, whether it's part of your personal mission statement or not, recycle it without looking again at any of the content.

This last step is very important. No matter how attached you believe you might be to something, if you haven't looked at it in a year, it can't be that important to you.

There are exceptions, of course. For example, diplomas and other certificates need their own storage. For things like

“Maintaining an organised space requires constant vigilance and small regular tasks.”

this, set up a new box (or drawer) called 'indispensable' and store paper that absolutely must be kept here. If you need it, you know where to find it, and yet you don't need to worry about how to categorise it, because that level of detail is unimportant.

By setting yourself up a routine of going through papers on an almost daily basis, you will not only reduce the mountains around you in a non-stressful fashion, you will also find that you are deciding whether or not to hold on to something the moment it comes through the door.

Combine that with the lessons in time management you learn by constantly questioning your actions, and without having to make a major (stressful and unsettling) life shift, and you create for yourself an organised and streamlined life bit by bit.

IATEFL members can access the first part of Alex's series in the members' area of the IATEFL website.

alex@wellandwill.com



Are you minimally organised? (Photo: Studio Light and Shade/Shutterstock)

My life in ELT

Deepti Gupta talks about her life and work

1. Tell us a little about your career path. How did you get to where you are now? What made you choose this direction?

It had always been my ambition to be a teacher. After doing an MA and an MPhil I started teaching in an undergraduate college in my city. An MPhil is a two-year course that falls between a master's and a PhD. It has a short research dissertation, which prepares researchers for writing a longer thesis. As I had started teaching in an undergraduate college, the idea was to continue in that college, perhaps for life.

But, during the second year of teaching English to undergraduate students, something happened that changed the course of my professional life. The English course that I was teaching was a mix of literature and language, and the students were very happy as it involved very little thinking or speaking. The syllabus design authority changed the English curriculum and introduced communicative language teaching (CLT). I was happy with the change and thought that this was just what my learners needed in order to truly make English a second language in their lives.

“After completing my PhD, I realised that ELT research is what inspires me and keeps me going.”

But I got a rude shock when most of them did not respond to the tasks and activities in class. When I explored the whole situation, I realised that in that year, 1987, English was not required much within India, and hence learners had no



Conducting a workshop



Deepti Gupta is a professor at Panjab University, India. She has taught for three decades; she has authored three books; she has published articles in *IATEFL Issues*, *Asian EFL Journal*, *Profile*, *ICFAI*, *Diviner* and *ELT Journal*; and she has conducted more than a hundred teacher training workshops.

need to use it. This raised many questions about the relationship between context and methodology in a society. A watered-down version of CLT continued to be taught, and I was quite unhappy watching the way things were going.

In 1991, a miracle rescued us all. That miracle was the liberalisation of the Indian economy, which resulted in many multinational organisations opening their stores in India. All these organisations needed young people fluent in English. My students now had no excuse and began to lap up every task and activity. There was a sea change in the whole ecosystem, and this experience led to my PhD

research project, which I based on the role of CLT in the Indian classroom.

After completing my PhD, I realised that ELT research is what inspires me and keeps me going. So, I said goodbye to the undergraduate college and joined the university where I still teach Linguistics and guide research in ELT. I never refuse any activity that involves ELT, and I never will!

2. What does a typical day look like for you?

On a typical day, I begin the routine with a one-hour class teaching literary theory to postgraduate students. After that, two hours are spent in meetings and routine administrative tasks. Then I guide the ELT research of my research scholars. After that, it's time for my next class, where I teach Applied Linguistics.

On some days, I go to other universities and colleges to deliver guest lectures. I also attend to Alumni Relations as a Dean. On average, once a week, I conduct a teacher training workshop for school or college teachers. Of course, publishing and reading activities continue through the week.

3. What do you particularly enjoy about your work? What inspires you?

I really enjoy motivating my students. The biggest inspiration for me is when a student submits a well-written assignment or a well-researched paper. When I travel and I meet my former students and I can see their passion for their work, I feel on top of the world! As a teacher trainer, I feel great when I conduct workshops.

4. What challenges do you encounter in your work, and how do you deal with them?

The job of a professor in a university is becoming very administrative in nature; the biggest challenge these days is the mental switchover required from administrative responsibility to academic interaction. In the classroom, the motivation of learners has become quite a challenge in these days of digital preoccupation. While being digitally connected gives learners a wider horizon, at the same time it often becomes a distraction!



Planning a conference

5. What accomplishment are you most proud of?

When I started teaching in the university, my job profile meant two types of academic activity: teaching postgraduate students and guiding doctoral research scholars. As an ELT person, teacher training is my passion too. This passion became more intense because of the realisation that there is no system of training new teachers in India. My ecosystem was not very receptive to my yearning for teacher training, yet, over the years, I have conducted more than a hundred teacher training workshops. This is an accomplishment I am very proud of, especially since I have gone the whole hog: I have trained primary and high school teachers, college teachers and university teachers.

6. What advice would you give to someone who wants to do the kind of work that you do?

Never say 'no'. If it involves ELT, just do it!

7. What is next for you? What are you hoping or planning to do in the future?

I have trained so many people in spoken English. I am also an IELTS examiner. My dream project combines Psycholinguistics and Applied Linguistics. I want to

understand the reason behind the smooth fluency in English of some learners and the jerky fluency of other learners, even when both sets receive the same training. Based on this research, I would create a learning system that helps all learners perform at the same level.

8. Is there anything else you want to say to Voices readers?

A teacher is always a learner!



Awarding certificates at a British Council workshop

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My life in ELT profiles people who are making a difference in ELT around the world. If you would like to be featured here, or if you know someone who deserves recognition, please get in touch at editor@iatefl.org.



Networking at a local ELT conference

What's happening in ... Iceland

Samúel Lefever outlines the ELT situation in Iceland

Introduction

The geographical position of Iceland as an island in the North Atlantic has made it especially important for Icelanders to learn other languages. Until recently, the primary language for the vast majority of people living in Iceland (current population approximately 360,000 inhabitants) has been Icelandic, an old Viking language. Due to geographical isolation, Icelandic has changed relatively little since the Vikings first settled on the island in 874 AD.

Since so few people outside the country speak Icelandic, Icelanders have put a lot of emphasis on learning other languages. Students learn at least two languages at compulsory school, English and Danish, and most students study a third and fourth language at upper-secondary school.

The spread of English

In recent years, the status of English in Iceland has swelled, and it is now seen as an important additional language necessary for all to know. Research conducted during the last decade indicates how English is changing from a foreign language context towards what resembles a second language situation, and yet that is an inadequate description. Arnbjörnsdóttir (2015) points out that the widespread use of English in Iceland is indicative of 'language spread', where people or language areas 'adopt a language for a given communicative function' (Garcia 2010).

Exposure to English is massive in Iceland, and it is evident all across the life span. Children from a very young age receive English input through television, film and the internet. An important aspect with regard to media use is that although much of the programming provided by the Icelandic National Broadcasting Service is dubbed in Icelandic, the majority of other media input is either subtitled or in the original language. There is also widespread use of English by older children and adults in Iceland. They use it for study or work, entertainment, accessing information and interaction with others.

“The geographical position of Iceland as an island in the North Atlantic has made it especially important for Icelanders to learn other languages.”



Reykjavik, Iceland



Samúel Lefever is an Associate Professor at the University of Iceland and teaches language

teaching methodology at the School of Education. He has done research on the learning and teaching of English with young learners. He is currently looking at young immigrants' language use and participation in Icelandic schools and society.

Studies have shown that both children and adults have positive attitudes towards learning English and are motivated to use it for their own purposes (Kristjánsdóttir, Bjarnadóttir and Lefever 2006; Jeeves 2013). Students of all ages report a high self-assessment of English proficiency and using English is seen as an unmissable part of their lives. All students recognise the value of

knowing English and they expect to use it in their future lives, especially for travelling, study and employment (Ingvarsdóttir and Jóhannsdóttir 2018).

Another indication of how English use has spread across the life span was found in a study of the incidental English learning of young children carried out in 2010. The results of the study showed that many young children (ages 8–9) in Iceland, who have not received any formal instruction in English, can successfully participate in simple conversations in English (Lefever 2012). These findings are supported by additional research which indicates that young children's English proficiency exceeds the curriculum goals for their first year of English instruction (Jóhannsdóttir 2010).

English in the school curriculum

This brings us to the question of how the changing status of English has impacted English teaching. As mentioned above, English is the first additional language taught at school, and English instruction begins no later than in Grade 4 (age 9). Many schools opt to begin teaching English in earlier grades and a growing number of preschools have introduced English into their curriculum. English is also compulsory at secondary school, and most students will have completed 9 or 10 years of English instruction before they enter university or other further education.

The objectives of English teaching are firmly grounded on the principles of communicative language teaching. The National Curriculum for the compulsory school level emphasises that students become competent in using English for a variety of purposes and situations, for both academic study and daily life activities. At the end of compulsory school (age 16) students should have attained a B1 level on the CEFR scale.

English instruction is almost exclusively provided by state schools. There are very few private schools in Iceland and private language schools offer English courses primarily for adults. English-medium or bilingual programmes are also scarce. There is an International School which offers bilingual studies in English and Icelandic to compulsory-level students, and one upper-secondary school runs an International Baccalaureate diploma programme, which is taught in English.

However, an increasing number of study programmes and courses are offered in English in higher education. The University of Iceland offers BA and MA programmes in International Studies in Education, which are taught entirely in English, and both it and other universities offer English-medium courses in a variety of fields, such as business,



Landmannalaugar lava field, Iceland

tourism, politics and cultural studies. It is important to note that the vast majority of reading materials in almost all fields at university level are in English, and the use of English reading materials at upper-secondary school is also increasing.

This context where curriculum input is mainly in English and student output is in Icelandic presents a number of challenges for both students and teachers. Research on this *simultaneous parallel code use* (Arnbjörnsdóttir and Ingvarsdóttir 2018) has shown that despite students' high self-assessment of English proficiency, they often find it difficult to deal with reading materials written for native speakers of English.

Teacher education and professional development

In 2008 the general requirement for teacher certification in Iceland at preschool, primary and secondary levels was changed from a bachelor's degree to a five-year master's degree. Students who want to teach at the compulsory level do a general pedagogy degree with specialisation in one or two subjects, for example English. To qualify to teach English at the upper-secondary level, students first complete a BA in English followed by a two-year teaching certification programme.

Professional development for English teachers is largely the responsibility of the individual and, unfortunately, is neglected by many teachers. English teachers often feel somewhat isolated in their workplace and find it difficult to build a 'community of practice'. But opportunities for professional development for language teachers do exist, and universities and educational organisations in Iceland offer professional



Spectacular scenery

development courses, such as summer workshops, seminars or short training courses. Teachers can also go abroad for conferences and 'refresher courses' and increasingly, English teachers are using the opportunities that the internet offers, such as online courses, professional networks and social media groups specifically aimed at English teachers.

The Association of Teachers of English in Iceland (ATEI) also plays an important role in teachers' professional development. As the only English teaching association in Iceland, it works to strengthen the teaching of English in Iceland and to support English teachers at all school levels. The Association was founded in 1969 and in 1970 became one of the first language teacher associations to be affiliated with IATEFL (Rixon and Smith 2017). The Association organises a variety of seminars, workshops, summer courses and social activities for English teachers, which provide them with opportunities to network, cooperate and develop professionally.

Conclusions

English teaching and learning has evolved over the years in relation to the changing status of English in Icelandic society and across the globe. English teaching is largely the domain of state schools, but English learning is not confined to the classroom. English has become an important part of the linguistic identities of people of all ages in Iceland, and many people are concerned about the impact that the spread of English may have on Icelandic. Meanwhile, English teachers are striving to take these changes into account with respect to English teaching. For example, ICT plays an ever more present role in English teaching, and a majority of teachers integrate internet resources such as digital media and apps into their teaching. Where these changes will ultimately take us is left to be seen.

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If you would like to write about what's happening in ELT in your own part of the world, please get in touch at editor@iatefl.org.

Materials reviews

Edited by Ruby Vurdien

This issue of *Voices* offers four interesting reviews on Testing, Evaluation and Assessment. In his review of *Fairness, Justice and Language Assessment*, Peter Beech explains how the Rasch model is used in assessment. In her review of *English Language Proficiency Assessments for Young Learners*, Erzsebet Bekes points out that assessing young learners' proficiency is complex and should be done carefully. Rory O'Kane concludes that *Assessing L2 Listening – Moving Towards Authenticity* provides food for thought about what was once known as 'the forgotten skill'.

Jonathan Culbert thinks that *Assessing English on the Global Stage: The British Council and English Language Testing 1941–2016* might appeal more to academic historians of language testing. Enjoy your read!

Fairness, Justice, and Language Assessment

Tim McNamara, Ute Koch and Jason Fan
Oxford University Press 2019
224 pages
ISBN: 978 0 19 401708 4

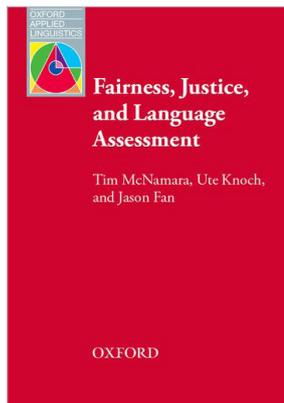
This book is part of the *Oxford Applied Linguistics* series and is essentially an updated and expanded version of McNamara's 1996 publication *Measuring Second Language Performance*. The new title refers to the distinction between *fairness*, which is used to refer to factors internal to a test, and *justice*, which designates external factors such as the policies and values implicit in the use of a test. Having explored this distinction in Chapters 1 and 2, the authors then go on to show how analytic methods, and in particular Rasch measurement, can be used to minimise the effect of these external factors and so produce test scores that measure as accurately as possible the abilities they set out to measure.

Chapter 3 comprises a detailed introduction to some of the basic concepts and procedures of the Rasch model in a way that is accessible to the non-expert and requires no previous knowledge of statistics. Throughout the book, explanations are accompanied by examples of test data, and a companion website provides supplementary material to support readers in conducting sample analyses.

While Chapter 3 reveals patterns through examining relatively simple data based on multiple-choice test items, Chapter 4 uses more complex data to introduce two extensions of the basic Rasch model. These can be used to analyse test items to which responses cannot simply be scored as right or wrong, such as short-answer questions



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for which there may be more than one point available, and extended response tasks for which raters may use detailed marking guides, introducing a further threat to fairness as different raters interpret these differently. Chapter 5 then moves on to the use of the many-faceted Rasch model, which is not focused only on the two facets of candidate ability and item difficulty, but which can also help with identifying rater variation and thereby calculating fairer scores.

While not requiring any prior knowledge, much of the book is quite technical; however, Chapter 6 comprises an interesting discussion of how the tools of Rasch analysis can be used to investigate fairness issues in assessments, and the concluding chapter returns to the topic of how we can reconcile fairness and justice in language testing as a social and political activity.

Peter Beech

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English Language Proficiency Assessments for Young Learners

Mikyung Kim Wolf and Yuko Goto Butler (eds.)
Routledge 2017
278 pages
ISBN: 978 1 138 94035 2

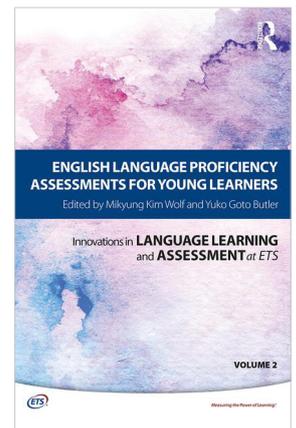
English is undoubtedly a global language and, as a result, there is a growing number of school-age children that start learning it at a young age. Assessing the English language proficiency (ELP) of these learners (ranging from ages 5 to 13 in the present volume) is a complex procedure that requires care and caution.

The book is a compilation of 14 articles in five sections, each dealing with an overview of ELP assessment (both *of* and *for* learning): its theoretical basis and frameworks, several empirical studies and the innovations that might appear in the 21st century.

The team of 36 authors presents an impressive amount of information regarding how young learners need to be assessed in such a way that their test results can be used both for the advancement of student learning and for selection, admission and certification purposes.

The articles in the volume provide a detailed description of how young learners constitute a different group, and why they cannot be assessed in the same way as older students. It is not just the fact that their contexts might be widely different, but also the fact that young learners' cognitive development is still taking place. They are still learning their first language (L1) and are hugely influenced by affective factors that define how well they do once they engage in the learning process, including the assessment phase.

Beyond the theoretical and developmental issues discussed in the collection, the authors provide a comprehensive description of how the *TOEFL Primary* (for learners between 8 and 11 years of age) and *TOEFL Junior* (ages 11 and older in an EFL context) tests were developed and validated.



Two articles were of particular interest to me: Papageorgiou and Baron's piece on how the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) can be used to interpret young learners' ELP, and Gu and So's piece on the strategies used by young English learners in an assessment context.

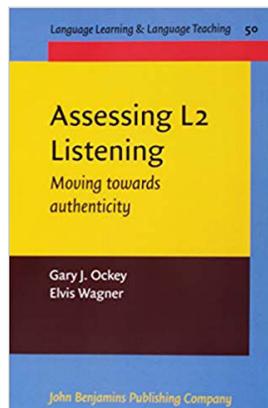
All in all, the book is an excellent source for anyone interested in the considerable differences between adult and young learners, since these affect not only ways of learning but also the fairness and validity of our students' assessment. Young learners are not stupid – they are just young.

Erzsebet Bekes

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Assessing L2 Listening – Moving towards authenticity

Gary J. Ockey and Elvis Wagner
(eds.)
John Benjamins Publishing
Company 2018
278 pages
ISBN: 978 90 272 0126 3



This publication by Gary Ockey and Elvis Wagner is Volume 50 of the Language Learning & Language Testing monograph series by the John Benjamins Publishing Company.

The book examines four main themes in the assessment of L2 listening: the use of authentic, real world spoken texts; the effects of different speech varieties of listening inputs; the use of audio-visual texts; and assessing listening as part of an interactive speaking/listening construct. It has relevance for listening researchers, oral proficiency teachers and language testers.

The publication is divided into 15 chapters, and within these each theme is presented via a review of the appropriate literature and explored through various empirical studies. The four themes are underpinned and linked by the concept of authenticity. It is thereby argued that by devising more authentic test tasks which bear a similarity to real world tasks, test developers can create more effective listening assessments. These will not only address communicative competence in a more robust manner but will also have a positive impact upon educational systems in general.

One of the sections which I found of particular interest was that covering different types of speech varieties. In an era of increasing multiculturalism, there is an onus on educators to prepare learners adequately for the various types of spoken English that they will encounter and to adjust listening assessment accordingly. Kang and Moran provide an insightful chapter on World Englishes, their speech characteristics and how varieties are perceived. They conclude that while incorporation of non-standard English accents in high-stakes English language proficiency tests would reflect the current demographics of global English, more research is required in the area of 'accented' English.

The issues in testing listening are complex and present a challenge for doing so in a reliable and valid manner. While the theory seems to be quite well understood, perhaps not enough is yet known about how to implement it in a

practical manner. Ockey and Wagner have given us useful guidance on these practical problems of how better to assess listening proficiency.

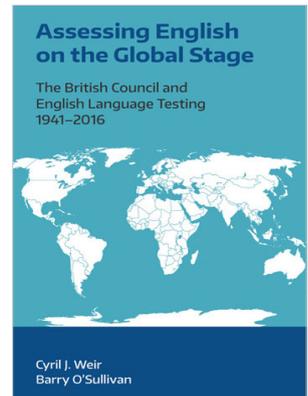
Overall, this is a well-organised, scholarly publication which provides food for thought about what was once known as 'the forgotten skill'.

Rory O'Kane

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Assessing English on the Global Stage: The British Council and English Language Testing 1941– 2016

Cyril J. Weir and Barry O'Sullivan
Equinox 2017
381 pages
ISBN: 978 1 78179 492 0



No doubt you have heard of the British Council and are aware that one of the many things this organisation 'does' is exams. You may know that IELTS, with approximately 3 million candidates annually, is a British Council exam. But did you know that the British Council's role is essentially to market and administer IELTS, leaving the development of its content to Cambridge Assessment English? Did you know that for a number of years before the arrival of Barry O'Sullivan in 2012 and the advent of Aptis, the British Council did little in the way of its own product development? *Assessing English on the Global Stage: The British Council and English Language Testing 1941–2016* brings to light these and many other nuances of the organisation's longstanding work in assessment.

The book is set out in three chronologically overlapping sections. The first section examines the origins of the British Council in the 1930s and traces its contributions to the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate's (UCLES) exam suite, e.g. FCE and CPE, and its project work with regional partners across the globe. The second section essentially looks at how IELTS developed and the shifting role played by the British Council in relation to the other partners, UCLES and IDP Australia. The third section details Aptis.

The authors, Barry O'Sullivan and the late Cyril Weir, are academics with an impressive track record in the field of second language assessment. They are also British Council insiders, with Weir a former Chairman of the British Council Assessment Advisory Board and O'Sullivan the current Head of Assessment Research and Development at the British Council. They have been able to draw on their considerable experience as well as a wealth of committee meeting minutes, interviews and personal communications with some of the key actors to produce a detailed account of not only what the British Council did, but also the behind-the-scenes activity which led it to travel in the directions it did. While this at times makes for a fascinating read, overall the book is probably of interest to academic historians of language testing more than to classroom practitioners.

Jonathan Culbert

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A teacher's voice

Mandira Adhikari helps students to develop vocabulary skills

As an English language facilitator with young learners, I had a challenge helping them to use correct spelling. Although spelling is important in developing effective reading and writing skills, I found it less discussed in the ELT literature than the pronunciation and meanings of words. Ehri and Rosenthal (2007) say researchers have paid little attention to the contribution spelling makes to vocabulary learning. They suggest that the retention of correct spelling enhances the learner's ability to remember the pronunciation and meaning of new words; furthermore, using correct spelling is related to confidence in language learning. Spelling should, therefore, not be neglected in the classroom.

In my context, spelling is generally learned through reading and memorisation. Assessment of spelling is done by giving written tests on the assigned words; this is a boring task for learners and can lead to a loss of motivation. In my case, I used to provide students with a list of 25 words, which they would memorise. I would test them on those words, and I sometimes asked them to rewrite the correct spellings ten times. However, I realised this approach wasn't helping my learners to develop spelling skills; instead, learners felt this task was a burden.

As a result, I implemented an approach called 'spelling features' to help my students to develop vocabulary skills. I found this approach very effective: learners started showing an interest in learning new vocabulary and were motivated to focus on correct spelling and other word features. The approach is very simple and effective for all levels of learners, and it helps them to improve their spelling skills as well as to develop vocabulary at their own pace.

In order to use the spelling features approach, facilitators should be aware of two components: the spelling features chart and the weekly spelling routines. These are discussed below.

Spelling features chart

The spelling features chart tells learners what to look for when analysing a word. According to the age and level of the learners, the facilitator can decide on what to include in the chart. Some basic components of spelling features charts are as follows:

- pattern of the week;
- number of syllables;
- number of consonants;
- number of vowels;
- consonant blends (*bl, sh, th, br*, etc.);
- small words found in larger words;
- root words;
- parts of speech; and
- silent letters.

The chart can be pasted in the classroom so that learners can refer to it daily for the new words they are learning. The chart is essential for the facilitator for the Tuesday activity,



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which involves discussing the spelling features with the class.

Weekly spelling routines

In order to conduct effective lessons using spelling features, the facilitator can allow 15 minutes per class, five days per week, for spelling features. A weekly spelling routine might be as follows:

- **Monday:** Generate a list of words that follow a particular pattern (e.g. words with short or long /a/ or /e/, or words with specific consonant blends), and introduce the pattern.
- **Tuesday:** Have learners look for spelling features and discuss each word from the list; analyse each word based on the spelling features chart.
- **Wednesday:** Make sentences using the words. Learners will work with a partner on puzzle pieces (blank squares and rectangles). Each pair gets a set for the activity. One of them will arrange the pieces to form the shape of a word, while the other guesses the word by looking at the number of pieces as well as the tall and short pieces used. If the learner is able to guess the word correctly, they get a point. The activity continues until all the words have been used.
- **Thursday:** Play a short game related to the words. Invite a student (Student A) to come to the front of the room and make a sentence using one of the spelling words. Student A responds, then invites another (Student B) to make a sentence using a different word. Student A goes to sit in Student B's seat. Continue until all the spelling words have been used and every student is sitting in someone else's chair.
- **Friday:** Hold a spelling dictation using Monday's words. Say the word, use it in a sentence, and ask students to write each word with the correct spelling. When all the students have written the words, they will exchange papers with a partner and check each other's work. The teacher will provide correct spellings on the board.

Variations

Variations are as follows:

- Ask learners to select their favourite word from the list; they write a short poem, story or essay related to that word.
- Conduct short spelling-related games such as Hangman and Find Missing Letters on Friday instead of giving a test. Ask learners to play the game in groups and give marks to each other.

Conclusion

After implementing spelling features for a year in my class, I have come to the conclusion that spending 15 minutes per class on spelling can help second language learners to develop better spellings of the words, along with writing skills. This activity is suitable for learners at different levels. Students demonstrate their interest in learning new vocabulary each week, and they develop confidence in pronouncing and reading new words.

Reference

Ehri, C. L. and J. Rosenthal. 2007. 'Spellings of words: a neglected facilitator of vocabulary learning'. *Journal of Literary Research* 39/4: 389–409.

mystery.mandira@gmail.com

Have you solved a problem in your classroom? A Teacher's Voice is a column in which teachers describe problems they encounter in their teaching and the solutions they develop. Send your articles to editor@iatefl.org

Focus on the SIGs

Business English SIG

In our July webinar, **Dragana Gak** explored the communication and language needs of engineers in a complex working environment, where they have to play the role of managers, businesspeople and entrepreneurs. Through a well-organised scheme, she showed us how to design engaging courses, materials and activities for this client segment. In August, **Claire Hart** gave a webinar called ‘Making the most of case studies in and out of class’. In a very dynamic way, she taught trainers how to select useful case studies and apply them to generate meaningful communication opportunities.

Our 32nd IATEFL BESIG Annual Conference was held in Adlershof, Berlin, Germany, from 11–13 October 2019. This year’s theme was ‘Back to basics’, and we investigated which tried-and-tested methods have stood the test of time and which innovative practices have become fundamental concepts in Business English and ELT in recent years.

BESIG already has plans for 2020. Once again, we will be present at the EVO Sessions which are due to take place from 11 January to 16 February 2020. **Sue Annan**, from the BESIG Online Team (BOT), is working on our proposal under the theme ‘English for the workplace’. If you are interested in taking part, please contact the BOT. In March 2020 we will be collaborating with the Argentine Teacher Association APIBA for our first event in South America. This will be in Buenos Aires from 13–14 March. And in April we have a Pre-Conference Event in Manchester, entitled ‘Stepping outside our comfort zone’, where we will be exploring a wide range of business English training activities. As ever, all the details are available on our website at besig.iatefl.org.

**Dana Poklepovic and
Evan Frendo**
Joint Coordinators
besig@iatefl.org

Learner Autonomy SIG

LASIG is already looking forward to the annual IATEFL Conference in Manchester. We hope that you can attend our Pre-Conference Event on 17 April 2020.

The title of our PCE is ‘Defining and contextualising language learner autonomy: theory and practice’. There seems to be a growing tendency for ‘autonomy’ to be used without much awareness of its history in language teaching theory and practice. The 2020 PCE will address this issue. Our plenary speaker, **David Little**, of Trinity College Dublin, will define language learner autonomy for the 21st century, explaining where his definition comes from, how it is supported by empirically grounded theory, and what it implies for language teaching and learning, whether in classrooms, self-access centres or online learning environments. The remainder of the day will explore the challenges that this definition is likely to pose in different educational contexts and geographical locations. An interactive poster session will provide opportunities to find out about learner autonomy projects in different countries; a workshop will introduce tried-and-tested approaches to motivating and empowering learners of all ages, from all backgrounds and at all proficiency levels; and a world café will give participants a chance to discuss possible solutions to the challenges they face in their particular context. We’re looking forward to interactive discussions and to generating new ideas with you in Manchester.

LASIG warmly invites you to submit a proposal for a workshop or poster presentation for our PCE. You can find more information at <https://lasig.iatefl.org/events/pce-2020/>.

Finally, we invite all IATEFL members to get in touch with us. You can join our Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/438798319626641/>, visit our website at <https://lasig.iatefl.org/> or email us at lasig@iatefl.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Christian Ludwig and Lawrie
Moore-Walter**
Joint Coordinators
lasig@iatefl.org

Literature SIG

LitSIG would like to remind everyone of our Pre-Conference Event in Manchester next year, a joint event held with the Global Issues SIG. We

will address a phenomenon which is an ever more pressing part of our contemporary world: migration. The title of our event is ‘Migrant narratives in the EFL and ESOL classroom’.

The reasons why people migrate are many and varied, and in our PCE we shall try to include the narratives of as many kinds of ‘people on the move’ as possible. Our day will include looking at migrants’ experiences as narrated in ‘diaspora literature’, works written by authors living outside their native country but whose writings are in some way related to their country of origin. Apart from written and oral storytelling, we intend to include other media in our observation of experiences of migration, such as song and music.

Pedagogy will be an important feature of our day: how to bring migrant narratives into the classroom, and how to use migrant narratives to promote intercultural awareness and social inclusion. To this end we will talk about using and creating appropriate materials, and we will suggest techniques suitable for teaching that involve migrant narratives, notably storytelling.

Confirmed speakers include **Jeremy Harmer, David Heathfield, Alan Maley, Alan Pulverness** and **Andrew Wright**. There will be more! We are also interested in creating opportunities for participants at the event to share their experiences: we will update you later on how we intend to do this.

As the day’s programme develops, we’ll update you via our e-bulletins, website (<https://litsig.weebly.com/>) and social media pages (<https://www.facebook.com/LitSIG/> and https://twitter.com/Lit_SIG).

Robert Hill
Coordinator
litsig@iatefl.org

Materials Writing SIG

MaWSIG started its second webinar series ‘MaWSIG meets ...’ in September with a joint webinar with the IATEFL Research SIG, followed by another webinar with the IATEFL Teacher Development SIG in October. The aim of the series is to provide more insight into materials writing and its connection with

other areas of ELT.

The IATEFL MaWSIG strand at the 8th ELT Council Malta Conference was a great success. MaWSIG Coordinator **Aleksandra Popovski Golubovikj** delivered a plenary session on ‘Three Es of materials writing: engage, educate, and empower’. **Jen Dobson**, MaWSIG’s Social Media and Technology Coordinator, gave a talk entitled ‘Creating YL project material exploring cultural identity’. You can read more on our blog.

Our PCE in Manchester on 17 April 2020 is called ‘Practical tools and tricks of the trade’. MaWSIG is preparing an exciting day filled with practical tips on materials writing for new and experienced writers. Check our Facebook page, Instagram, and Twitter for updates on all our activities.

Aleksandra Popovski Golubovikj
Coordinator
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Research SIG

ReSIG has recently been involved in several exciting events and collaborations. ReSIG has supported the Argentine Teacher Association APIBA to set up a Teacher Research SIG via consultancy, and we have participated in events and research activities. ReSIG annually supports the MA TESOL Quick Fire Dissertation Presentation Event at the University of Warwick. This year several MA students from different universities in the UK shared their dissertation work in progress, and **Ana Ines Salvi** delivered a workshop on gains from doing an MA programme in ELT.

Following on from the ReSIG and GISIG jointly organised TESOL Africa Pre-Conference Event, ‘Teachers in Action: Exploring Global Issues through classroom research’, held on 8 August in Abuja, Nigeria, we are now supporting teacher participants in developing their research projects via mentoring, webinars and online discussions. We are expecting to publish the work the mentors, organisers, webinar hosts and teacher-researchers are doing by August 2020.

The ReSIG *ELT Research* newsletter will be published at the end of the year and we look forward to reading all the insightful and varied contributions from around the world. ReSIG will soon publish a compilation of research accounts by teachers from around the globe. Keep an eye on our website for further details. ReSIG is also publishing an open-access edited book entitled *Energising Teacher Research*, a follow-up publication from the 2018 ReSIG–Bahçeşehir University conference held in Istanbul.

In October–November 2019, ReSIG will be hosting a discussion of the research article ‘Researching the Intercultural: Intersubjectivity and the Problem with Postpositivism’ by **Malcolm MacDonald** and **Adrian Holliday**, focusing on mixed research methods and the intercultural aspects of research. The paper will be freely accessible on our website thanks to the support of the *Applied Linguistics Journal*.

**Dr Ana Inés Salvi and
Dr Kenan Dikilitaş**
Joint Coordinators
resig@iatefl.org

Teacher Development SIG

We are now well into preparations for IATEFL 2020 in Manchester. This year, we are flying solo for our Pre-Conference Event on ‘Outside the hub: exploring underdog forms of teacher development’. Typically, when our profession thinks of development opportunities, we often default to certification courses, postgraduate courses and conferences. Without question, these can be valuable modes for a teacher to develop professionally. However, they can have barriers to access that are out of our control. Additionally, these formalised approaches may leave participant contexts largely out of the equation or be organised from a top-down perspective. At our PCE, we seek to highlight the less celebrated alternative forms of teacher development: those that utilise a localised approach to methodology, focus on teacher-driven needs and create sustainable impact on curricula, attitudes, or practices. For more info or to register, please visit tdsig.org/pce

In addition to our PCE, we’re launching the inaugural volume of our new peer-reviewed, open-access publication, *Teacher Development Academic Journal* (TDAJ). Key themes addressed from a focus on the teacher development angle of research (of course!) include projects and commentary related to bottom-up teacher development, teacher identity, teachers as researchers, mentoring and pedagogies. For more info: bit.ly/tdajournal

Meanwhile, this month our face-to-face workshop, ‘Beyond the communicative approach: personal significance in language learning’ with **Adrian Underhill**, **Roslyn Young** and **Piers Messum**, is happening in Brighton, UK, on 23 November. At the time of writing, there are still spaces available. Learn about it here: bit.ly/tdsigbeyond

Finally, we are always excited to share our new episodes of *Developod*, the TDSIG podcast (14 and counting!), so if you haven’t yet subscribed, do check them out anywhere you get your podcasts. Episodes related to each of the projects mentioned above will follow.

Tyson Seburn
Coordinator
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Workshop on action research led by Amira Salama in Abuja

Spotlight on the Testing, Evaluation and Assessment SIG

Maggi Lussi Bell, TEASIG Editor, tells us about the goals and events of the Testing, Evaluation and Assessment SIG.

The Testing SIG was founded in 1986 by Keith Morrow and a further six testing enthusiasts, one of whom, Dave Allan, still serves on the committee today. Its aims were to support individuals and institutions interested in language testing and assessment. In 1997, the name was changed to TEA (Testing, Evaluation and Assessment) SIG to include the areas of teacher appraisal as well as curriculum, programme and institutional evaluation.

Our mission

TEASIG's main mission is to address the needs, respond to the interests of, and promote professional development for its members in connection with testing, evaluation and assessment in all areas of English language teaching. In order to do this, TEASIG

- provides a platform to connect students, teachers, educators and testing, evaluation and assessment experts worldwide as well as share resources and ideas;
- arranges specialised plenaries, talks and workshops at international events;
- holds an Open Forum at the annual IATEFL Conference to discuss current testing, evaluation and assessment issues;
- publishes articles 2–3 times per year and regularly hosts webinars on TEA-related themes; and
- keeps its members abreast of developments in the field of testing, evaluation and assessment in ELT.

Our events

TEASIG organises a full-day Pre-Conference Event (PCE) each year with a focus on a particular aspect of testing, evaluation and assessment. This year plenaries and workshops were given on the theme of 'Authenticity in assessment of productive skills'; in Manchester 2020 we will be holding a joint PCE with the IP&SEN (Inclusive Practices and Special

Educational Needs) SIG to consider how assessments in ELT can be made more accessible to everyone and what improvements need to be made for learners with special needs.

As part of the annual IATEFL Conference, TEASIG hosts a Showcase, with a number of sessions relating to different aspects of our field given by a variety of speakers. The full-day event closes with the Open Forum, which gives participants the opportunity to meet the committee and network with fellow TEASIG members, as well as to discuss topical and upcoming issues.

Later in the year TEASIG organises its own conference with plenaries, talks and workshops relating to a specific area of testing, evaluation and assessment. These events have already taken us around the world and have included venues in Prague, Innsbruck, Dubai, Beijing, Istanbul, Hyderabad, Barcelona, Dublin, Opatje, Siena, Granada and London.



Joint event with Pearson, London 2018

Our webinars

In addition to the international events described above, TEASIG regularly hosts webinars throughout the year. The webinars are free of charge for both members and non-members, and TEASIG members have access to all previous webinars (a total of 25+) on request. The two most recent webinars gave valuable insights into the recently published *CEFR Companion Volume* and attracted high numbers of participants.

Membership and scholarships

TEASIG currently has around 250 members, with nine of them serving on the committee.

As part of its commitment to

encouraging teachers with an active interest in testing and assessment, each year TEASIG awards a scholarship to support one of its members in attending the annual IATEFL Conference. The scholarship covers registration for the PCE as well as for the Conference, membership of TEASIG for one year and £800 towards conference-related expenses. The 2018 winner was Mona Mersal from Egypt, who gave a presentation on technology-enhanced formative feedback at the TEASIG Showcase in Liverpool in 2019.

Our committee



TEASIG committee

The TEASIG committee brings a diversity of skills and a wealth of teaching and testing experience from different corners of the globe to the team. The members are currently based in Italy, Turkey, Switzerland and the UK. More information about each individual can be found at <https://tea.iatefl.org/about-teasig/teasig-committee/>

Our publications

After many years of regular *Newsletters*, the last of which, No. 64, was published in September 2018, TEASIG has recently brought out the very first issue of *Testing, Evaluation and Assessment Today*. The name has been changed to better align with the content, which strives to meet the changing needs of those involved in the

world of English language testing today and the fresh challenges it presents. We also publish a Conference Proceedings after the annual TEASIG conference.

To celebrate the many years of informative, thought-provoking contributions to TEASIG publications, the first volume of *Best of TEASIG* came out earlier this year. It is a collection of articles from 1992–2001, tracing the history of testing, evaluation and assessment, and focussing on many topics still relevant today. The next volume is planned for 2020.

Social media

In addition to our website <http://tea.iatefl.org> TEASIG can be found on Facebook and is also present on Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. Links to our social media accounts can be easily found on the website.

Getting involved

If you have any questions about the activities of TEASIG, or are interested in submitting an article (or book review) for publication or hosting an event in the area of testing, evaluation

and assessment, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Our committee members would be delighted to meet you at one of our events or webinars, and introduce you to the active TEASIG network.

Maggi Lussi Bell
Editor

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Ceyda Mutlu & Mehvar Ergun
Turkkan

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From the Associates

**IATEFL's
Associates
Representative
Lou McLaughlin
brings Associate
news.**



Welcome to the Associates section of *Voices*. This issue contains some event reports directly from the Associates themselves, providing a great insight into what other TAs run as part of their organisations. We would really like to share your news as much as possible so please get in touch with updates and reports on your events which have taken place. Please send this to me, Lou McLaughlin, at associaterep@iatefl.org

Report | IATEFL Poland – teachers for teachers!

**By Marcin Stanowski
and Geoff Tranter**

Twenty-eight years ago, before Alan Maley triggered the creation of IATEFL Poland, Polish teachers had little opportunity to take part in continuing professional development. In the early days, IATEFL Poland members were mainly university teachers, coming from departments of Applied Linguistics or teacher training colleges, and thus mostly younger teachers had the best chance of being infected with the IATEFL virus. The good news is that the virus keeps on spreading to new generations, now reaching teachers from state schools and private language schools.

However, the challenge now is that competition in ELT is increasing. More and more institutions are offering training courses and organising conferences, and currently around ten different ELT events are held every week in Poland. There are almost 75,000 teachers of English in state schools and an estimated 200,000 ELT professionals in Poland, yet we are reaching merely a fraction of the profession, and these are probably teachers who are the most dedicated to improving the quality of teaching.

Almost every annual IATEFL Poland Conference brings together over 1,000 participants, which makes it the most popular ELT event on the continent of Europe. It is known for its friendly and relaxed atmosphere, where foreign language teachers from Poland and abroad are able to network, discuss and socialise. The 28th event took place this year in the beautiful city of Gdansk, at the University of Gdansk Faculty of Social Sciences. Could there be a better place to explore this year's conference motto 'Beyond the horizon' than a coastal city with a thousand-year history?

This three-day event started with several pre-conference events, and then participants attending the main conference had an opportunity to take part in live lessons, where they could observe classes run by Associate members as well as by methodology gurus. We ran several advanced English lessons for teachers as a remarkable opportunity to gain hands-on experience with the language we are teaching. In addition to plenaries and workshops, the conference's repertoire also included

poster presentations, panels and debates.

The Conference is obviously the icing on the top of our activities, but we also offer local activities of all kinds, which are frequented by large numbers of teachers. The 6th English for Specific Purposes Conference was held in January, followed by a Global Issues SIG Forum for Teachers, as well as a Business English SIG event in May in Krakow.

Apart from numerous half-day events spread all around Poland (around 100 each year), including ICT, culture, methodology and applied linguistics workshops, IATEFL Poland also holds well-established events. These include our IATEFL Poland Inspirations for Teachers series: regular tours by renowned teacher trainers. This spring it was Mark Andrews with our Young Learners SIG Coordinator Urszula Kropaczewska, who visited three cities running workshops and offering live lessons on the theme of 'Understanding our classrooms, understanding ourselves ...' And in summer 2019 we organised a tour with Hugh Dellar, offering advanced lessons and a workshop on the Lexical Approach and NNSTs.

Every year our regional coordinators offer around 100 workshops, seminars and meetings where our members, colleagues and friends spend time learning and networking.

Another initiative aimed at our online supporters consists of monthly webinars where we invite speakers such as Maria Sachpazian, Evan Frendo, Alicja Gałazka and Aleksandra Zaparucha. You can find more about our scheduled webinars here: <https://iateflpl.clickmeeting.com/>

This year marks the fifth Public Speaking Contest for middle and secondary school students, who this year are being challenged with the thought-provoking topic 'Things I wish were taught at school'; this is very appropriate at a time when a nation-wide debate on education is storming through Poland. We were pleased to see more than 20 finalists at the annual conference in Gdansk on 20 September this year.

We are also proud that every year we offer our services to 'third-age' language students, who are invited to take part in a 'Culture lane for senior-citizen students' – a summer course for B1-level learners who cherish the value of lifelong learning.

That's what we do, that's how we reach out to our fellow teachers with up-to-date news on methodology and pedagogy! Teachers for teachers! Meet us at www.iatefl.org.pl and www.facebook.com/iateflpoland

Report | ETAI – 'The use of digital tools for learner autonomy in communication skills'

By S. Rajagopalan

This workshop, supported by the Hornby Trust, was held at Annammal College of Education for Women, Thoothikudi, India, on 15 and 16 February 2019.

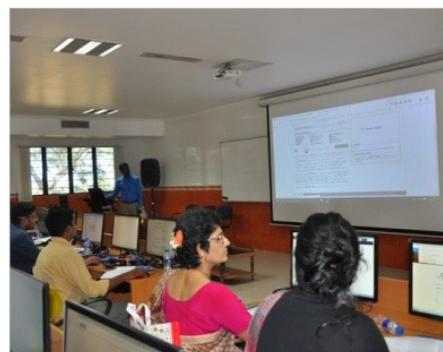
Day 1

The workshop began with Session 1 by Dr P. N. Ramani on 'Learner

autonomy – what, why and how'. He addressed the concept of learner autonomy and reiterated the importance of encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning in order to develop autonomy. He introduced a few classroom practices and highlighted learners' and teachers' roles in introducing autonomy in institutions.

In the next session, Dr Revathi Viswanathan introduced various strategies presented by O'Malley and Chamot and discussed the importance of designing self-instructional materials related to speaking and listening skills. She insisted that teachers need to prepare worksheets and self-instructional modules to encourage students to take responsibility for their learning. Dr Revathi discussed the various components of self-instructional tasks and provided sample materials. She also introduced the software Audacity, and she emphasised the value of setting up a self-access centre in every institution to help students learn and practice communication skills themselves.

Next, Dr Xavier Pradheep Singh discussed the use of digital tools for developing writing skills. He provided participants with hands-on experience of using tools like Nearpod, Tricider, Padlet, Trello, Google Docs and Grammarly. He reiterated that teachers need to use various digital tools in order to encourage students to use language skills even beyond the language classroom.



Day 2

The first session of Day 2 focused on 'Developing autonomy in reading skills' and was led by Dr P. N. Ramani and Dr Revathi Viswanathan. Dr Ramani spoke on the basics of reading skills and the relationship between reading ability and learner autonomy. Aspects of the reading process were introduced with examples. Participants were shown how to use Lexile to measure text difficulty and level of readability. Dr Revathi Viswanathan encouraged participants to prepare a self-instructional module for reading. She divided the participants into groups and provided a template for each group to prepare a task. At the end of the session, these tasks were collated and made into a single file.

Dr Revathi Viswanathan next discussed strategies for developing lifelong learning skills and listed a few self-evaluation rubrics for students to use while directing their own learning. Dr M. S. Xavier Pradheep Singh introduced a few learning platforms for encouraging students to do online courses.

In the final session, Dr M. S. Xavier Pradheep Singh introduced resourceful websites on vocabulary, such as Visuwords, Lexpedia, Vocagrabber, Lexical Lab, Your Dictionary, Lingro and Word Hippo, and demonstrated in detail how to use them. Dr Ramani introduced a few online resources on grammar.

During the feedback session, participants shared their views on the two days of sessions. Then, with the aim of sharing the knowledge gained from the workshop, participants were encouraged to conduct a similar type of workshop for teachers in their respective regions.

After the feedback session, Dr S. Zahira Banu, Assistant Professor of English, Sri Meenakshi College, Madurai proposed a vote of thanks. There are no words to express our thanks to Dr A. Joycelin Shermila, Principal of Annammal College of Education for Women, Thoothikudi, for having made excellent arrangements for our workshop.





Get involved in IATEFL Special Interest Groups and connect with other professionals from within your ELT specialism

Share your ideas and work with your global peers

Network with like-minded professionals

Apply for exclusive scholarships

Attend local events

Visit www.iatefl.org for more information

Coming events

2019

NOVEMBER

1-4 Japan

JALT2019: 45th Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning & Educational Materials Exhibition, Nagoya City

'Teacher efficacy, learner agency'
<https://jalt.org/conference/jalt2019>

8-9 Turkey

IATEFL English for Specific Purposes SIG, Leadership and Management SIG and IATEFL Teacher Training and Education SIG event, Izmir University of Economics

'Joint forces for joint goals: strengthening EMI through ESP, LAM and TTEd'
<http://secure.iatefl.org/events/event.php?id=197>

14-16 Turkey

19th INGED ELT Conference, Ankara

'Outside the box'
<https://inged.org.tr/>

15-16 Czech Republic

ATECR ELT Convention, Prerov

'No limits'
<https://davidk527.wixsite.com/mysite>

2020

APRIL

18-21 UK

54th International IATEFL Conference and Exhibition, Manchester

Pre-Conference Events 17 April
<https://conference.iatefl.org/index.html>

Submissions for the calendar are welcome and should be sent to membership@iatefl.org. Submissions should follow the format in the calendar above, and should include submission deadlines for papers for potential presenters.

Who's Who in IATEFL

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IATEFL Representative on the ELTJ panel: Shelagh Rixon

IATEFL Representative on the ELTJ Management Board: Catherine Walter

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Please visit the individual SIG website for a list of current committee members

Business English (BE) www.besig.org

Joint Coordinators: Evan Frenedo and Dana Poklepovic besig@iatefl.org

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ES(O)L) https://iateflsolsig.wordpress.com

Coordinator: Lesley Painter-Farrell esolsig@iatefl.org

English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

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Joint Coordinators: Aysen Guven and Caroline Hyde-Simon espsig@iatefl.org

Global Issues (GI) gisig.iatefl.org

Coordinator: Varinder Unlu gisig@iatefl.org

Inclusive Practices & SEN (IP&SEN)

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Learner Autonomy (LA) lasig.iatefl.org

Joint coordinators and PCE & LASIG Showcase organisers: Christian Ludwig and Lawrie Moore-Walter lasig@iatefl.org

Leadership and Management (LAM)

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Pronunciation (Pron) https://pronsig.iatefl.org

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Teacher Development (TD) https://tdsig.org

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Testing Evaluation and Assessment (TEA)

https://tea.iatefl.org

Joint coordinators: Ceyda Mutlu and Mehvar Turkun Ergun teasig@iatefl.org

Teacher Training and Education (TTed)

https://ttdsig.iatefl.org

Coordinator: Burcu Tezcan Unal ttdsig@iatefl.org

Young Learners and Teenagers (YLT)

https://yltsig.iatefl.org

Coordinator: David Valente yltsig@iatefl.org

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(as of October 2019)

ACPI (Costa Rica) www.acpi-tesol.com

ACTA (Australia) www.tesol.org.au

AINET (India) www.theainet.net

AMATE (Czech Republic) www.amate.cz

ANELTA (Angola)

APC-ELI (Cuba)

APPI (Portugal) www.appi.pt

ATECR (Czech Republic) www.atecr.weebly.com

ATEF (Finland) http://www.suomenenglanninopettajat.fi

ATEI (Iceland) www.ki.is/feki

ATEL (Lebanon) www.atel-lb.org

ATER (Rwanda) http://www.aterw.org/

ATES (Senegal)

ATETE (Denmark)

AzerELTA (Iran, Islamic Republic Of) www.eltanet.org

AzETA (Azerbaijan) www.azeta.az

BC TEAL (Canada) www.bcteal.org

BELNATE (Belarus) www.ir.bsu.by/kel/teachers/belnate.htm

BELTA (Bangladesh) www.belta-bd.org/

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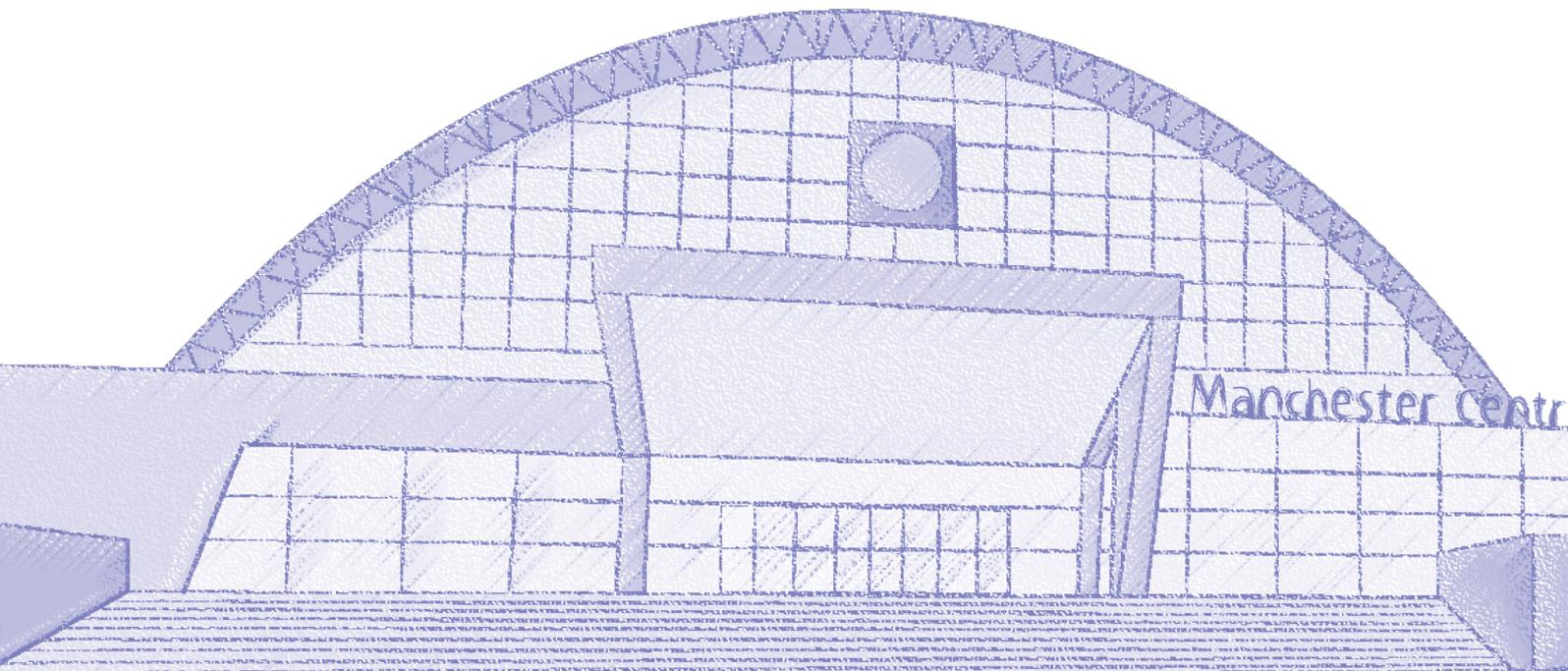
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