

THE INGED NEWSLETTER

NEWS ON-LINE



Issue 3
September 2009

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From the President

Dear colleagues,

We are all ready for a new academic year. After a nice summer vacation we all feel fresh and rested. As dedicated teachers we are ready for all kinds of challenges.

In this issue, I want to summarize what ELP is and how we can implement it in our setting. The European Language Portfolio (ELP) was developed and piloted by the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, from 1998 until 2000. It is a product of Common European Framework.

ELP is a document in which those who are learning or have learned a language - whether at school or outside school - can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences. It contains a **language passport** which its owner regularly updates. A grid is provided where his/her language competences can be described according to common criteria accepted throughout Europe and which can serve as a complement to customary certificates. The competences are defined in terms of skills. The skills referred to in the *language passport* are UNDERSTANDING (LISTENING and READING), SPEAKING (SPOKEN INTERACTION and SPOKEN PRODUCTION), and WRITING. The levels, derived from the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework*, are BASIC USER (A1: BREAKTHROUGH and A2: WAYSTAGE), INDEPENDENT USER (B1: THRESHOLD and B2: VANTAGE), and PROFICIENT USER (C1: EFFECTIVE OPERATIONAL PROFICIENCY and C2: MASTERY). The document also contains a detailed **language biography** describing the owner's experiences in each language. It facilitates the learner's involvement in planning, reflecting upon and assessing his or her learning process and progress. Finally, there is a **dossier** where examples of personal work can be kept to illustrate one's language competences. The learner is given the opportunity to select materials to document and illustrate achievements or experiences.

Some possible ways of integrating the ELP in the curriculum and coursebooks are:

- aiming to develop learners' communicative proficiency.
- adopting communicative and skills-based objectives in the form of "I can do" statements.
- making the language learning process more transparent to learners, helping them to develop their capacity for reflection and self-assessment, and thus enabling them gradually to assume more and more responsibility for their own learning.
- creating an atmosphere conducive to deeper, more effective learning.
- sparing some room for self-correction and peer-correction.
- encouraging pair work and group work; letting learners mark or evaluate their own work; offering learners a chance to choose their own tasks and to decide on their own pacing; and thus increasing learner autonomy.
- enhancing learner motivation.
- using texts or activities that contain authentic (or semi authentic) language.

We should seriously question our teaching approaches under the light of the above mentioned information. If we continue teaching language through the segregated approach (also known as language-based approach), we will neglect the communicative and skills-based aspects of the ELP. All aspects of language are interwoven. All main skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) and associated skills (syntax, vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation) function together for effective and successful communication. Hence, it would be a mistake to teach students grammar only at the sentence and sub-sentence levels. Much of the apparent arbitrariness of grammar disappears when it is viewed in a context, i.e; from a discourse-level perspective.

The integrated approach exposes learners to authentic language and challenges them to interact naturally in the language. Integrating the language skills

promotes the learning of real content, not just the dissection of language forms. It can be highly motivating to students of all ages and backgrounds. The ELP favors the use of inductive approaches over the deductive ones. In deductive approaches, the teacher gives an explicit statement of the rule which the learners then apply to examples. The teacher can never know how much of the "given information" is actually taken by the learner because the learner is a passive recipient of the information. In inductive approaches on the other hand learners are 'led' to the rule through a series of steps. Learners induce the rules and meaning from exposure to the language in use; hence they are active in the process.

Wish you all a successful academic year. I hope to see you all at the 13th International INGED ELT Conference where we can stand together as usual.

Prof. Dr. Aydan Ersöz
September 2009

**Have you looked at
the other sections
on our web page?**

Try the Class Activities ...

**Also take a look at
the *Calendar of Events*
to find out about what is going on in other parts of the
world...**



From the Editor

Dear Readers,

In this issue you will find summaries of sessions from the METU Convention, IATEFL Conference and the TESOL Conference in Denver in addition to the impressions of the two SpellEvent finalists from Turkey: Cansu Gök and Tuna Ögüt. Our Board member Fatma Ataman has also sent us her impressions of the finals in New York. Hope you enjoy reading these and also hope that you will start thinking about participating in the INGED SpellEvent in 2010.

A small reminder: The Annual International ELT INGED Conference will be held at Gazi University in Ankara this year. In this issue and on our web page, you can find the list of Plenary Speakers. We are looking forward to seeing you there and meeting some of you in person. You can find a copy of the Registration Form for this conference in this issue. The Conference Program will be made online as soon as it is ready.

In the other sections of our newsletter: If you are a gmail user, then the Technology page has some tips for you as to how to better use this email service. Critical reading is always a hot issue for EL teachers. In this issue, there is a paper written by a colleague on this topic.

Wishing you a healthy, happy and successful academic year... See you at the INGEDE Conference in Ankara!

Suzan Öniz
Your Editor

THE ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

To all INGED Members,

The Annual General Assembly of our association will

be held on

at 5 p.m. on Friday, 9 October 2009

at The Department of Basic English,

Middle East Technical University,

E Block, Auditorium 1.

If the required number of members are not present,

the second meeting will be held

at 12:00 on Sunday, 25 October 2009

following the last session at

the 13th International INGED ELT Conference

at Gazi University, Ankara.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE ???

AN INGED AFTERNOON AND AN INGED EVENT



INGED Afternoons

WHEN?	As frequently as there is a guest speaker available
HOW LONG?	Approximately two-hour meetings
HOW MANY PRESENTERS?	Only one guest speaker
TOPIC?	A practical session on a topic relevant to English language teachers.
FOR WHOM?	Open to all audiences whether they are INGED members or not.

INGED Events

WHEN?	As frequently as there are several guest speakers available on the same day
HOW LONG?	Approximately three to four hours
HOW MANY PRESENTERS?	More than two guest speakers
TOPIC?	One general topic or several separate topics relevant to English language teachers
FOR WHOM?	Mainly for INGED members
REQUIREMENTS?	Advance registration
FEE?	A reduced fee for INGED members
CERTIFICATE?	A Certificate of Attendance for INGED members

FOR PROSPECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS

The INGED Newsletter *News On-Line* appears during the first week of March, June, October, and December. The deadline for sending in your contributions via email is the end of the month preceding the deadline.

➡ NOTES FROM A CONFERENCE

Please state the title of the conference or event you are going to describe; your full name, title and affiliation; your brief description. The body of your description tells the readers the aims of the conference or seminar that you intend to report on and summarizes one or two of the sessions that you attended in such a way that readers feel that they were present at the session being described. Please include details so that your summaries have a practical function. You may include a brief section on how many people attended the meeting, where it was held and who the main presenters were but the focal point of the report is the summary of the sessions that you wish to share with the readers.

➡ TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING

Please state the title of the ideas that you are going to describe; your full name, title and affiliation; your step-by-step description, bearing in mind that some readers may be totally unfamiliar with the ideas that you are describing. Please specify the technical requirements and make sure that the websites that you mention are active at the date of submission. The technology that you choose to describe may be a tool that teachers can use directly in class with their students or it may be a helpful means for you as a teacher-researcher.

➡ YOUR PAPERS

Please send us your papers relating to pre-school through adult English learning and teaching. The accepted papers will be written in formal register with references and a following bibliography. Please make sure to spell check the document and proof read the final copy for accurate language use.

➡ THE VOICE OF INGED MEMBERS

This is YOUR page! Please send us news about your pupils and students, the latest developments in your teaching environment, teaching tips you would like to share with your colleagues, and comments.



**Please send us your manuscript
AS A WORD FILE
&
WITHOUT ANY FORMATTING.**

13th International INGED
ELT Conference

inged



ACTIONS

WORDS

AND

hosted by

**Gazi Faculty of Education,
Gazi University**

**October 23 - 25, 2009
ANKARA**

www.inged.org.tr

The 13th International INGED ELT Conference at Gazi University

Our Plenary Speakers

Dr. Alan Tonkyn / University of Reading, U.K.

Alan Tonkyn is Senior Lecturer in Applied Linguistics at Reading University. He lectures in SLA, spoken language and research methods. His main research interest is in L2 speaking skills development.

Peter Grundy / University of Northumbria, U.K.

Peter Grundy is an IATEFL past President and author of *Doing Pragmatics* and several resource books for teachers, including *Beginners*, *Newspapers* and *Writing for Study Purposes* (with Arthur Brookes).

Sandra McKay / San Francisco State University, U.S.A.

Sandra McKay earned a bachelor's degree in English (1966), a master's degree in American Studies (1969), and a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics (1971) from the University of Minnesota. After graduation, she went on to earn a national reputation as one of the leading educators in the field of English as a Second Language. She has been a professor at San Francisco State University since 1976 where she teaches English to speakers of other languages. She is the recipient of five Fulbright Fellowships as well as numerous fellowships and grants from countries around the world. This distinguished scholar is the author of at least twelve books and more than forty-five articles. She received the Ben Warren International House Trust Prize for her most recent book, *Teaching English as an International Language: Rethinking Goals and Approaches*. As indicated in one letter of nomination, "the wide use of her textbooks and teaching materials has influenced thousands of scholars around the world."

Vincent Smidowicz / Sidmouth International School, U.K.

Vincent Smidowicz is a teacher, teacher-trainer, author and examiner with over 30 years in the English Language Teaching profession. He has represented City & Guilds as a consultant in more than 20 countries including in Turkey on several occasions.

REGISTRATION FORM
The 13th International INGED ELT Conference
Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey
23 - 25 October 2009

For Information and Questions
Prowin
 Phone: +90 312 428 06 06
 Fax: +90 312 428 06 34
 e-mail: to Fulya Tosun: inged2009@gmail.com
<http://www.inged.org.tr>

PARTICIPANT

Title: () Prof. () Assoc. Prof. () Dr. () Mr. () Ms.
 Last Name: _____ First Name: _____
 Institution: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ Postal (Zip) Code: _____ Country: _____
 Phone: _____ Fax: _____
 e-mail 1: _____ e-mail 2: _____

REGISTRATION FEE

	On or Before 25 September 2009	After 25 September 2009
INGED Members	<input type="checkbox"/> 70.-YTL	<input type="checkbox"/> 100.-YTL
Non-Members	<input type="checkbox"/> 100.-YTL	<input type="checkbox"/> 130.-YTL
Registration fee includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation in sessions, the conference booklet, tea or coffee. 	Registration Fee:	

ACCOMMODATION

Arrival date: _____	Time: _____	Flight no: _____
Departure date: _____	Time: _____	Flight no: _____
DIVAN OTEL ****	In double room / per person* <input type="checkbox"/> 120.-YTL	In single room / per night <input type="checkbox"/> 205.-YTL
CLASSOTEL ****	In double room / per person* <input type="checkbox"/> 90.-YTL	In single room / per night <input type="checkbox"/> 130.-YTL
ALDINO OTEL ****	In double room / per person* <input type="checkbox"/> 85.-YTL	In single room / per night <input type="checkbox"/> 120.-YTL

*Name of the person I would like to share the room with: _____

Accommodation Fee:

- Accommodation will be allocated on a "first come first served" basis.
- **Hotel:** Price includes breakfast, taxes and service charges.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

Total sum to be paid:

() Bank transfer

to the order of "Turizm Merkezi Seyahat ve Organizasyon A.Ş." Garanti Bankası, Ankara Tunali Hilmi Branch

YTL Acc. # :107-6297643 SWIFT Code: TGBATRISXXX IBAN :TR58 0006 2000 1070 0006 2976 43

The bank transfer should clearly state the name of the participant. A confirmation of the wire transfer must be submitted with the registration form as a proof of payment.

() Payment by credit card

- () Visa () Mastercard

SpellEvent 2009



THE SPELLEVENT FINALS IN NEW YORK

by
Fatma Ataman

The 1st Franklin SpellEvent in cooperation with TESOL was held in New York City on 10 August, 2009. 14 students aged 14-15 from 7 different countries participated the competition. The participating countries are Argentina, China, Germany, Italy, Mexico, South Korea and Turkey. Parents of the students and Teacher Association representatives were also invited by Franklin.

Parents of the students and Teacher Association representatives were also invited by Franklin.

Franklin is a highly respected company of Electronic Publishers in the USA and the aim of this international competition is to increase interest and competence among learners of English language. Franklin approached Teacher Associations in various countries through TESOL so that regional competitions would be held to



select two students from each country to attend the 1st International SpellEvent. INGED organized the Local SpellEvent on 18 April, 2009 and Cansu Gök from TED Ankara College and Tuna Ögüt from ATEK College were the winners in the local event.

Cansu and Tuna represented Turkey very well with their warm, friendly and dignified attitude, and their presence in the competition definitely contributed positively to the

whole event. They have had new friends from different countries and have definitely started much more enjoying learning English.

Press release announcing the winner, pictures, video and information about SpellEvent 2010 can be found at <http://www.spellevent.org/index.htm>

INGED is proud to have created such an opportunity for learners.



Hi,

I'm Cansu, the winner of Turkey and one of the few lucky people who got to be a participant in the amazing Spell Event! First of all I want to thank INGED for making Turkey participate in the Spell Event, my school TED Ankara College for joining the competition, my teacher Nancy Riggs for her support and coaching and of course my parents for being there for me and supporting me... This whole experience really matured me and although I lost, I gained very good friends, improved my English and vocabulary a lot and I got to see NYC!!! It was my dream to go there and by spelling I fulfilled my wish myself... And that's a pretty important thing to me... The organization in Turkey was really good and I

wasn't so stressed because all the teachers were making jokes and comforting us. And the organization in NY was perfect too, our bus tour was amazing we got to see nearly everywhere of NYC, Hard Rock Cafe was awesome and the fact that they gave us the chance to bond with each other was great. We went to stores together, chatted all night in the lobby and had a real good time... Making friends was one of my wishes about going there and I'm glad I got to do that too... Lastly, I wish the best for the next year's participants. I'm sure the organization and the event will be even better next year. I wish I could take part in it again...

Thank you again for this opportunity, it was an honor to participate and represent Turkey.

Cansu GÖK
1st Place Winner of Turkey

NOTES FROM THE SPELLEVENT FINALS IN THE U.S **by Tuna Öğüt**

I arrived in New York 2 days before the SpellEvent so I had time to visit some near places before the competition. I saw Central Park and I was really impressed because it looks like a forest more than a park! Also I had enough time to see Downtown and Hudson River. There's an amazing view through the river and I think Hudson got its fame deserving it.

The second day we went on a Manhattan tour with other spellers and saw the place where the Twin Towers once stood. Now there's the construction of the Freedom Tower there. After the tour we returned to the hotel and went to the Hard Rock Café.

The next day was the big day. We all enjoyed the SpellEvent and I'm very happy for Clara - the girl who won the 1st place - That night we had dinner in the Grand Salon and got our rewards. The next day almost everyone was returning to their countries. Well, I didn't! I still had 12 days in America. I had a flight to Washington D.C that day and it was hard to say good bye to everyone.

I spent 5 days in D.C and I saw the White House, Washington Monument -which was HUGE- , and Lincoln Memorial. I also went to the National Aquarium -which

had really interesting species- and National History Museum was on my route too. Then I bought some souvenirs and returned to the Big Apple (New York).

I went on a walk on Broadway. The next day I went to the Hudson River again to take a semi-circle boat tour around Downtown. I saw the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island and Brooklyn Bridge during the tour. The next morning I was at Guggenheim Museum. I loved the architecture plans of Frank Lloyd Rights. The museum was big and there were lots of objects to see so it took hours to see the whole of Guggenheim Museum. That night I was walking on Broadway again and I met a Bolivian flute player. His flute's tone was amazing. The next day I went to Natural History Museum. There are lots of things to see there.

And on my last day in U.S, I went to the Bronx Zoo. Unfortunately there was a storm the before so most of the cages were closed. So I returned from the Bronx with disappointment. I visited the Bolivian guy on Broadway again and next morning there I was on the plane...

*Would you like your summary
to appear in this newsletter?*

*The next time you go to
a conference or workshop,*

*take detailed notes
and send these to us
in a format similar to what you are reading on these
pages.*

*In this way, other INGED members can also
benefit...*

SEETA

SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

<http://seeta.eu/>

WHAT IS SEETA?

The SEETA project was initiated by TESOL Macedonia-Thrace Northern Greece and is seed funded by the British Council Greece. INGED is a member of SEETA as of 1 June 2008. The other members are: LTA Albania, ELTAM Montenegro, BETA Bulgaria, IATEFL Poland, TESOL Macedonia Thrace Northern Greece, ELTAM Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, RATE Romania, ETAI Israel, ELTA Serbia, IATEFL Slovenia.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES?

The overall objective of SEETA is that this networking community will provide an ongoing and structured means of communication which can be developed by future associations and their members for their mutual benefit.

HOW DO INGED MEMBERS BENEFIT?

All INGED members can participate in the online discussions and mini courses on the SEETA moodle platform. INGED members receive email messages about these online interactive opportunities and all that they have to do is follow the instructions in the message.

WHAT'S ON?

Have a look at the SEETA web page for the upcoming activities...

THE 12TH INGED DRAMA FESTIVAL IN ANKARA

will be held in May in 2010.
Details will be posted
on the web in mid November.



TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING:

GMAIL TIPS

by
A. Suzan Öniz,
METU, Ankara



Filters and Labels

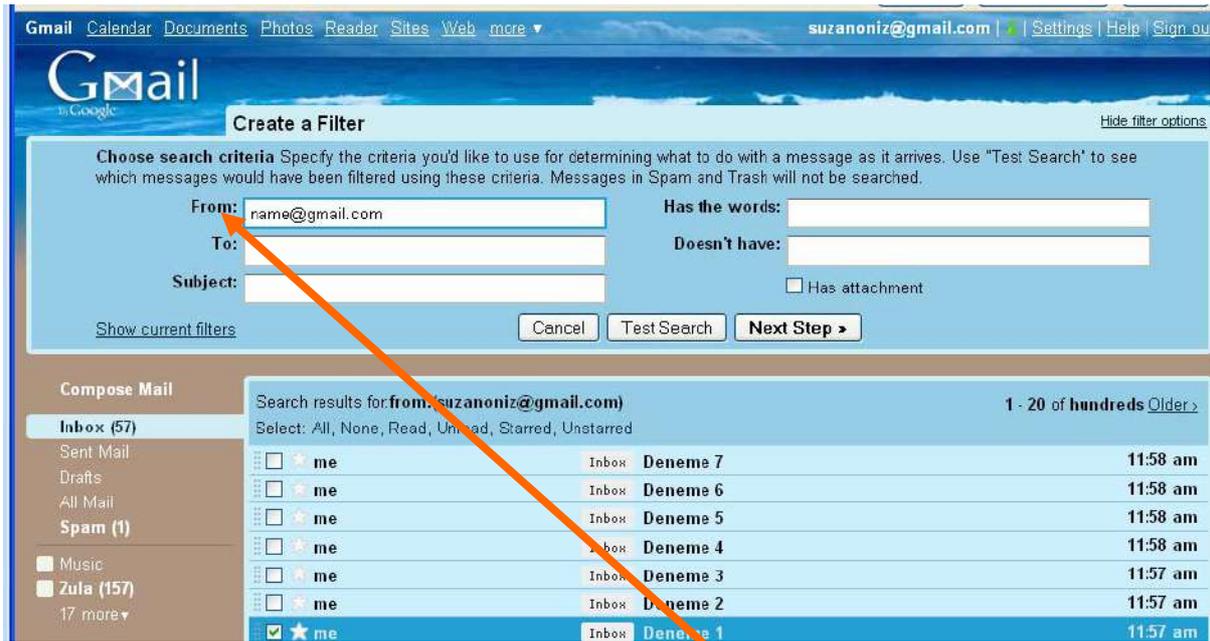
To filter a message:

Either tick/select a message in the INBOX list or open a message and click on **MORE ACTIONS** at the top.



Click on **FILTER MESSAGES LIKE THESE**.

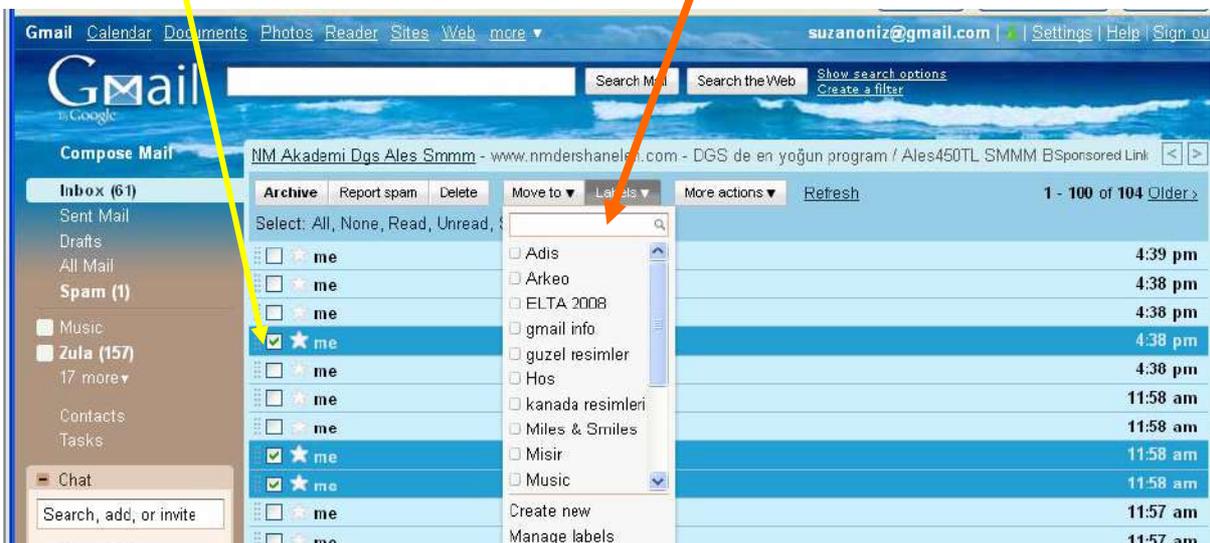
Your screen will look like this:



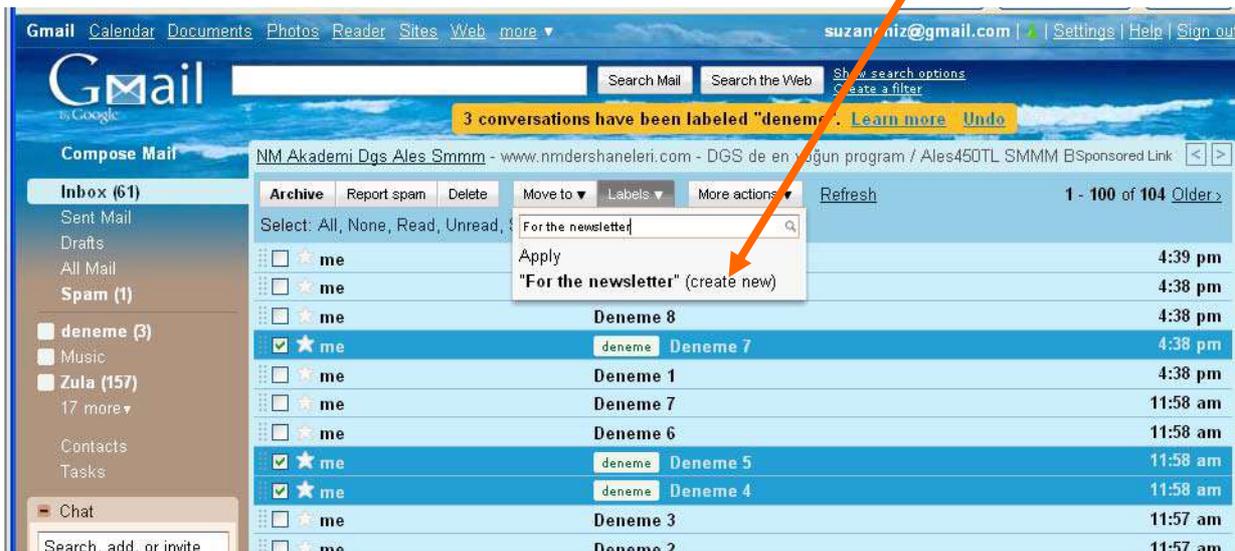
Filters can be created based on six criteria: From, To, Subject, Has the words, doesn't have, has attachment. You may mark more than one of the criteria.

To add a label to a message:

Tick the message/s that you wish to label and keep in a separate folder. Click on LABELS. Write the name of the label in the box at the top.



After you type in the name of the new label, click on 'Create new'



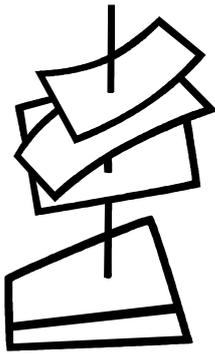
The messages that you had checked before will now have the new label next to them.



You could leave these labeled messages in your Inbox, but this means that there will be a lot of messages with different labels all crowding your Inbox. Solution? Move the messages with the same label into the Folders with that label. How? Select the messages that you wish to move; click on 'Move to' and find the folder for these messages in the dropdown menu; when you click on this folder, your selected messages will automatically disappear from your Inbox and be stored in the folder you chose. These folders all appear on the left column.



If at any time you wish to delete a folder, go through your list of folders in the left column, click on the little arrow that will appear before the name of the folder, choose 'Delete label.'



**REFLECTIONS FROM
THE 43rd TESOL CONVENTION
& EXHIBIT
IN DENVER:
"UNCHARTED MOUNTAINS,
FORGING NEW PATHS"**

26 - 28 March 2009

**Summarized by
Nurdan Gürbüz
METU, Ankara**

We arrived in the mile high city two days before the convention and the next two days were sunny and bright to let all the TESOLers see a bit of the town. However, the latecomers had to fly into a blizzard which closed down the airports and delayed many flights. I caught myself wondering whether I'll be able to make it back home. In the Colorado Convention Centre people were too busy to worry about the blizzard as they were all running along the corridors up and down, rushing from one session to another.



I have attended many sessions and noticed that this year there were many sessions on language and technology, online communities and communication as well as many others on various topics. Here, I'd like to comment on the three plenary sessions by Allan Luke, Jack Richards and Janet Zadina respectively.

The opening plenary by Allan Luke was titled as "Unpacking the Schooling of Linguistic and Cultural Minorities: A Sociological Narrative and Map. In his plenary

speech, Luke presented several life narratives and he questioned what happened to linguistic and cultural minority people as they were placed in mainstream schools and cultures. He also discussed the limitations of language education these students go through and focused on developing strategies in order to improve the school experiences of linguistic and cultural minorities. He suggested multicultural curriculum reform, bilingual education, compensatory early intervention programs and critical and culturally appropriate pedagogies. Luke also embellished his speech with amusing examples and anecdotes and at one point even talked about his kindergarden crush on Shelley Wong by whom he was introduced.

The second plenary I'd like to comment on was by Jack C. Richards. Richards started his speech by showing videos of his 'seasonal palaces' in New Zealand and Singapore respectively, which caused both admiration and wonder among the audience. Richards' plenary was titled as "The Changing Face of TESOL" and he talked about the recent changes and trends in TESOL,



latest instructional practices and the impact of globalisation on the spread of English. When I looked at my session notes, one of them stood out: one of the recent changes in TESOL was "not only putting theory into practice but also theorising practice" which reminded me Kuamaravadivelu's post-method pedagogy. I have attended the other sessions by Richards in Denver and thought he looked very trendy with his bright colour leather jacket and eye-glasses and the content was very rich and inspiring.

The last plenary session worth sharing here was by Janet Zadina, a cognitive neuroscientist, who captivated her audience with great presentation skills, very clear examples and wonderful jokes. Zadina's session was "Language, Learning and the Brain: Creating new Pathways" in which she presented the findings of latest research on language and brain. In her session we had a chance to see visual images of how learning takes place in our brain. Zadina was very good at simplifying cognitive neuroscience terminology and making everything very clear and enjoyable for her audience.

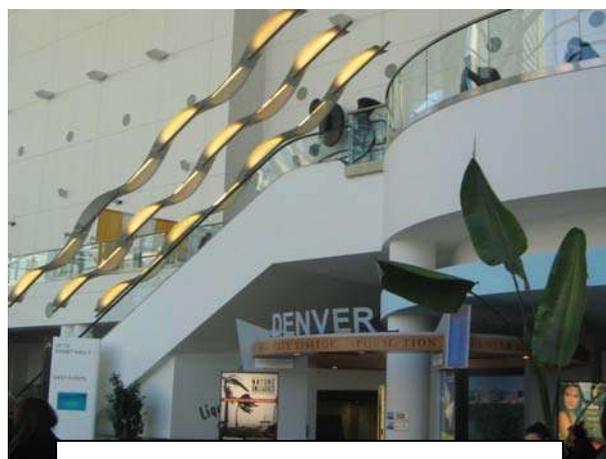
In sum, Denver TESOL, as the other two I have attended so far, was full of hundreds of great sessions difficult to choose from and it was a great opportunity to meet a lot of people from all over the world. I found it very helpful to choose the sessions before the convention through the TESOL website (called TESOL itinerary) and I strongly recommend that to everyone planning to attend future TESOL conventions.



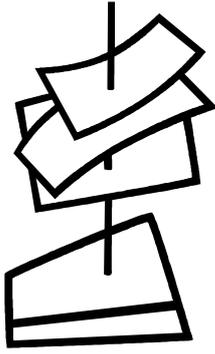
The Blue Bear
of the Convention Center



The site of the plenaries



Books & EV upstairs



NOTES ON
THE IATEFL TEA SIG
Testing, Evaluation and Assessment
Special Interest Group

Summarized by
Zeynep Urkun
IATEFL TEA SIG Coordinator

Dear colleagues at INGED,

I've been meaning to write a piece for the INGED Newsletter for a long time and finally managed to make this happen thanks to the its wonderful editor, Suzan Öviz.

Some of you may already be aware that I started working as the coordinator of the IATEFL Testing, Evaluation and Assessment Special Interest Group (TEA SIG) in 2007. Since then, life has been really busy, to say the least. That's why I thought I would first give you a little bit of background about the IATEFL TEA SIG before moving onto its activities during the 2009 annual IATEFL Conference in Cardiff.

"Quick" history of the 23 years of the IATEFL TEA SIG

As associate members of IATEFL, I'm sure you already know that IATEFL is a charity organization, founded in 1967 by the late Dr Bill Lee, who, identifying the needs of teachers from a wide range of educational contexts across the world, wanted to provide opportunities for them to network and develop their profession. What better way of doing this, he thought, than through establishing an international teacher association?

In the 42 years after its establishment, IATEFL has grown to include over 3,500 members, in 100 countries, ranging from Iceland to Chile and China to Monaco! Number of members range from 1 in Kenya to 150 in Japan and it has associate members from about 60 countries.

Again, as associate members of IATEFL, you are definitely aware that IATEFL operates through its 14 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) which really make up what IATEFL is all about. These SIGs are:

1. Business English
2. Leadership and Management
3. Learning Technologies
4. ESOL
5. English for Specific Purposes
6. Global Issues
7. Learner Autonomy
8. Literature, Media & Cultural Studies
9. Pronunciation
10. Research
11. Teacher Development
12. Teacher Training and Education
13. Testing, Evaluation & Assessment
14. Young Learners

The SIG that I have been coordinating, the TEA SIG, is relatively "young", having been established in 1986 under the leadership of Keith Morrow, the current editor of ELTJ. The idea was to show that testing wasn't only for "professional testers" but touched the lives of all teachers so why not raise awareness and share experiences? Having been the Chair of the initial steering group, Keith considers himself the "midwife" of the TEA SIG (isn't this a wonderful analogy?)

Naturally, the world of testing was very different when the TEA SIG was born: the word "alternative assessment" was still an alien concept to many and, thus, the SIG was named the "Testing SIG". Keith remembers those days fondly, saying the following:

"Imagine a world without assessment, without portfolios! Yet it was an exciting time in the testing world. Ideas about communicative testing were leading to revolutionary changes in established tests. Authentic texts were beginning to be used in reading and listening tests; paired and group formats were being introduced in oral tests to provide opportunities to test different types of interaction; explicit performance criteria were being developed to help in the marking of writing and speaking tests. Interestingly enough, these are still hot

topics now, but the professional agenda is much broader and includes areas such as computer adaptive testing which would have seemed science fiction in 1986."

In time, of course, Testing SIG, changed its name to Testing, Evaluation and Assessment SIG to reflect the much broader scope of the world of assessment.

The very first "official" coordinator of the TEA SIG was Dr Brian North who was one of the delegates attending the inaugural meeting organized by Keith Morrow. As soon as he became the chair of the "Testing SIG", he organized a Language Testing Colloquium in 1989 in Bournemouth. In 1990, he had to hand over the chair as he started working on the Common European Framework and he is now best known as "Mr CEFR"

The next coordinator was Dave Allan, otherwise known as "Mr Placement test". He had gone to Testing Colloquium in 1989 with some serious concerns as to how there could be a 'communicative legacy' but he came out of several of the sessions of Charles Alderson, Geoff Brindley, Brian North and Alastair Pollitt, with a real sense of the directions that testing could and should take and a realization that from then on it wouldn't just be 'testing' but 'testing and assessment'. It was during his 8 years as the coordinator that he, together with Kari Smith, then TEA SIG Committee member, changed the name from "Testing SIG" to "TEA SIG".

The next coordinator was Prof Kari Smith, who believed that assessment was just as important a tool to enhance motivation and learning as it was as a tool for selection and accountability. Under her coordination, from the end of the nineties, teachers' competence in carrying out sound classroom assessment became central to TEA SIG activities. Although she left the coordinatorship some time ago, she strongly believes that TEA SIG is central in supporting EFL teachers find a balance between commercially driven testing trends and pedagogically sound assessment approaches.

The next coordinator was Carel Burghout who was originally a teacher trainer much involved in cultural and literary studies and a truly professional interest in TEA came late and mainly through Kari's invitation to edit the TEA SIG Newsletter. Carel not only coordinated the SIG but also was the Newsletter editor was many years, as well as managing the TEA SIG website. Some 'hot' topics of his period as the coordinator were: developments in computer-based and computer-assisted testing; equivalence of computer-based tests and paper-based tests; issues in performance testing; peer assessment in distance

learning; criterion-reference co-evaluation; coping with exam stress and the Common European Frame of Reference.

I'm sure you can appreciate the fact that when the position of TEA SIG Coordinator was offered to me, I had a very tough act to follow. Feeling quite honored by the offer, I accepted and the first thing we did was to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the TEA SIG with a special edition of the TEA SIG Newsletter. (please see a copy at <http://tea.iatefl.org/>) It wasn't long before I realized what an immense amount of work had been accomplished in the past 20 years by the previous TEA SIG Coordinators. Since then, I've been very busy, carrying on the mission of the TEA SIG. As part of that mission, I've organized the TEA SIG Pre-Conference Events every year at the IATEFL Annual Conference.



Coordinators, past and present (from right to left, in chronological order):
Keith Morrow, Brian North, Dave Allen, Kari Smith, Charles Burghout & Zeynep Ürkün

I've also spent quite a bit of time, organizing small TEA-related conferences around the world, as part of our mission to take TEA-expertise to local settings by organizing small events and making it possible for local delegates to network with colleagues from all over the world and share their experiences. We've had very successful conferences in:

- **Opatija, Croatia in 2007**, on the Benefits and Limitations of the CEFR (Cd of the proceedings available at the IATEFL online store (<https://secure.iatefl.org/onl/shop/index.php>))
- **Dublin, Ireland in 2008**, on the Issues in Assessing ESOL (proceedings available at the same address)

Our upcoming conferences, for those who are interested in attending or presenting, will be the following (also available at <http://tea.iatefl.org/>)

- **Famagusta, Cyprus, 23-24 October 2009**, on the "Recent Approaches to teaching and Assessing Speaking", with the following plenary speakers:
 - Sue Davies, City & Guilds
 - Dr. Evelina Galaczi, Cambridge ESOL
 - Prof. John H.A.L. de Jong, Pearson Language Tests
 - Prof. Liz Hamp-Lyons, University of Bedfordshire
- **Dubai, UAE, February 11-12, 2010**, on the theme of "Establishing and Maintaining Standards". Once again, we will put together an attractive program which will contain plenary talks offered by:
 - Dr. JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall, University of Maryland - Baltimore County
 - Dr. Neus Figueras, Spanish Ministry of Education / EALTA
 - Prof. Barry O'Sullivan, Roehampton University, UK
 - Dr. Nick Saville, Cambridge ESOL
 - Prof. Kari Smith, University of Bergen, Norway
- Finally, on **April 7, 2010**, we will be running a Pre-Conference Event at the annual IATEFL Conference in Harrogate on "Assessing reading: Can we really do it?" where we will be exploring issues related to the testing and assessment of reading. The day will consist of 5 talks, presented by:
 - Dr. Neil Anderson, Brigham Young University, Guatemala
 - Dr. Christine Coombe, Dubai Men's College, UAE
 - Dr. Neus Figueras Casanovas, Spanish Ministry of Education / EALTA
 - Dr. Hanan Khalifa, Cambridge ESOL, UK
 - Keith Morrow, ELTJ, UK

If any of you would like to get more information on any of these events, please feel free to e-mail me at zeynepu@sabanciuniv.edu.

To conclude, my wish is to see the IATEFL TEA SIG continuing to have a strong presence in supporting EFL teachers in testing, evaluation and assessment related issues - especially in emphasizing the importance of the positive backwash of formative assessment, rather than opting for more commercially driven testing trends.

With very warm wishes
Zeynep Urkun
IATEFL TEA SIG Coordinator

IATEFL 2009 Cardiff Conference
From the Testing, Evaluation and Assessment SIG Perspective
Spotlight on the Testing, Evaluation and Assessment SIG (TEA SIG)

Here's a quick look at some of the most recent TEA SIG activities, as well as information about some future events.

The Pre-Conference Event in Cardiff, 2009

The TEA SIG PCE in 2009 was titled "Placement Testing: the Status Quo vs. Actual Needs". The topic attracted so much interest that the registration was closed down about 3 weeks before the conference and we had a full house of lucky delegates who managed to get a place in the room.



TEA SIG PCE in Cardiff: Susan Sheehan, Barry O'Sullivan, John de Jong, Simon Beeston, Zeynep Ürkün, Tony Prince, Dave Allan

The day consisted of 4 plenary talks, presented by Dave Allan, Tony Prince, John de Jong, Simon Beeston and Barry O'Sullivan, as well as a panel discussion led by zeynep Urkun when Susan Sheehan also joined in.

TEA SIG Program Day in Cardiff

As is the custom in every annual conference, TEA SIG organized a day of selected talks in Cardiff, on April 2nd 2009, Thursday, which offered the following talks:

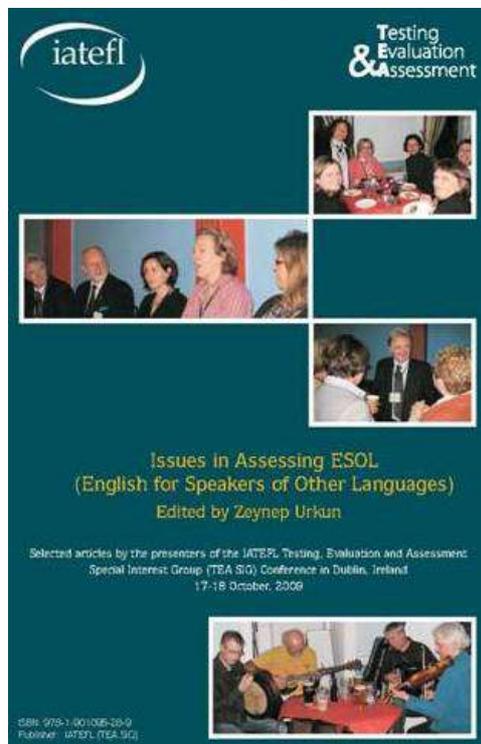
- Assessing a new writing task type: Short Answer Responses (SARs), by Zeynep Urkun;
- Developing speaking assessment scales across languages and levels, by Ann Humphry-Baker;

- SIMTEST: a web-based component in an EFL placement test battery, by Mick Sumbling & Pabl Sanz;
- Empowering teachers as testers , by Christine Coombe;
- Assessing a learner's proficiency in spoken English, by Sue Davies.

Once again, just like the PCE, we had a full-house at every session. We are delighted that all the speakers of the day will be contributing an article of their talk to the TEA SIG Newsletter so if you are not a TEA SIG member this may be the right time to join! This will mean those of you who were unable to make it to Cardiff would be able to read about the content of the program in the TEA SIG Newsletter.

Extra TEA SIG Publication on the Issues in Assessing ESOL

As part of our Open Forum in Cardiff, TEA SIG proudly presented an extra

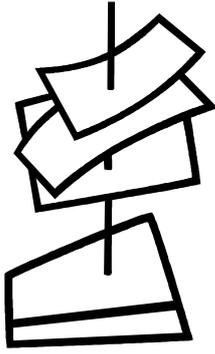


publication, a CD-Rom consisting of the articles written by the speakers of the TEA SIG Conference in Dublin, Ireland (held in October 2008). This was our second attempt in being as environmentally-friendly as possible, after the CD-Rom we published on the Common European Framework or Reference.

If you are a TEA SIG member, you must have received an e-mail at the beginning of April 2009, asking whether you would like a copy of this publication, and if you replied to Ellie Broadbridge at ellie@iatefl.org , you should have already received a copy. If not, please contact this e-mail address to receive your personal copy.

The new TEA SIG Scholarship

As part of the Open Forum in Cardiff, we were delighted to announce a new scholarship for TEA SIG members. As of 2010 conference in Harrogate, a scholarship of £ 500 will be offered to one delegate presenting on a TEA-related issue, sponsored by Trinity College London. I would love to see my colleagues at INGED make use of this opportunity.



**REFLECTIONS FROM
THE 2ND TEACHER TRAINERS'
CONFERENCE:
"REACHING OUR HORIZONS"
at TOBB UNIVERSITY**

8-9 May 2009

**Summarized by
Prof. Dr. Aydan Ersöz**

The Foreign Languages School of TOBB University held its second teacher trainers' conference 'Reaching Our Horizons': A Platform for Sharing Best Practices in 8 and 9 May 2009. The event was sponsored by the Pearson Longman Ltd. Company. The aim of the conference was to bring the teacher training unit representatives of various universities together so that they could share their experiences and practices.



**Kristina Smith giving her plenary
"The Coming Wave: e-training"**



**Kristina Smith explaining
Gilly Salmon's 5 step model**



**Sibel Tüzel Kandiller from METU running
her workshop:
"Don't tell me! Don't show me! Let me!"**



Sibel Tüzel-Kandiller talking about the observation process at METU

I was asked to represent INGED by giving a plenary speech, running a workshop and leading a panel discussion. The title of the workshop was "The Tongue is Mightier than a Blade". My plenary speech was on "What makes a good teacher". The panel discussion which was held at the end of the conference covered the issues that required further attention such as improving the language awareness of teachers and taking action when observation as a professional development process fails to reach its aim. The panelists were Prof. Dr. Aydan Ersöz, Dr. Deniz Kurtoğlu-Eken, Gülfem Aslan and Kristina Smith.

The conference was a huge success as it offered us a platform where we could share our problems sincerely and honestly; and, most of us found some solutions from the practices of other colleagues.

A Brief Summary of the Workshop: "The Tongue is Mightier than a Blade"

Teacher development is a continuous process that goes on in the entire career of the teacher. Observation is a part of this process. There are different

forms of observation: self-observation; student observation; peer observation; supervisor observation.

Simply put, lesson observation by peers (or supervisors) means sitting in on a class and observing a teacher in action. The task gives a chance to the teacher to reflect on his/her teaching; and, modifying his/her teaching.

Most of the institutions see classroom observation as an integral part of their quality assurance system. It is usually carried out by a qualified member of staff - in most cases by a teacher trainer employed at the same institution who is responsible for the instructors' training and development.

If we want classroom observations to serve their aim, we should be very careful when giving feedback. Feedback is about attempting to modify someone's behavior and ensuring that they don't repeat the same mistake a second time. Validity and content is important when giving feedback but language will often determine its success.



While giving feedback, observers should try ...

- a. to give the feedback as soon as possible after the lesson - because feedback works best when it is 'fresh'.
- b. to describe what they observed using their notes and not to be biased.
- c. to focus on tasks, activities, techniques, approach etc. and not to focus on personality.
- d. to ask observees to comment and ask questions and not to impose their own ideas and opinions.

- e. to be constructive and not to make any negative criticisms.
- f. to be informative and not to be opinionated.
- g. to be balanced and not to only focus on problems.
- h. to give advice and suggestions if observees ask for these and not to give advice based on what they would have done.



While receiving feedback, observees should try ...

- a. to be open and not to get defensive.
- b. to accept praise and not to be too modest.
- c. to listen actively and not to impose their views.
- d. to reflect and not to dismiss things they may disagree with.
- e. to explore and not to be passive. They can use the opportunity to find out how they can change and develop.
- f. to commit and not to ignore the feedback.

If the language of the feedback is confrontational, the listener will become defensive and will stop listening. When the feedback begins with 'you', it is an accusation. It becomes personal. The listener will be too busy trying to find the words to justify what s/he did. S/he will start thinking if the feedback is fair and reasonable.

Using 'I' statements is safer because they reflect the observer's perception. They don't include any judgments or accusations.

After mentioning the problematic issue, the observer should talk about its impact.

It is difficult to be descriptive. It is easier to be evaluative. Sometimes observers feel that they should correct something or someone. They should try to give constructive feedback more often than corrective feedback.

As trainers, we should realize that we can't change other people. It doesn't matter if we are trying to help them improve themselves. However, if we can reach them, we can "influence" them. Change has to come from the individual. Unless the person is willing and convinced, they won't change.



A Brief Summary of the Plenary: "What makes a good teacher"

Teachers have a direct influence not only on the student achievement and academic growth but also on student attitudes and belief systems. According to some research, the effectiveness of the individual teacher is the single biggest factor affecting students' academic growth.

The following attributes are important qualities of good teachers:

- Tactfulness
- Even-temperedness
- Adequacy
- Commitment
- Humor
- Encouragement
- Rapport

We can briefly explain these attributes in the following manner:



Tactfulness: showing skill and sensitivity in dealing with people; having or showing a sense of what is fitting and considerate in dealing with others. Good teachers know that students are human beings who want to be treated with respect and care.

Even-temperedness: not getting easily irritated; remaining calm; having an easygoing and cheerful disposition. They know that the aggression, negative attitudes and behaviors cause more negative reactions. When a problem occurs, they remain calm and avoid personal confrontation. This keeps them calm and in control of students, of them and the situation.

Adequacy: being competent in English and in methodology; knowing the subject well. Good teachers know the material and present it well. They have the necessary command over the subject matter they teach. This way, they can be more comfortable and confident.

They create ongoing and regular opportunities to learn from each other and improve their language skills. They know that ongoing professional development keeps them up-to-date. They

- Do action research (classroom-based research), work with colleagues, do peer observation;
- Join in professional development activities such as attending seminars, workshops, conferences;
- Read books and other publications to catch up with the new ways, new ideas, new systems, and new approaches;
- Subscribe to professional publications such as journals and magazines;
- Be a member of a professional organization or association to develop a professional identity; and/or,
- Do academic studies (join a Master's or PhD. Program).



Commitment: dedication; the act of binding yourself (intellectually or emotionally) to a course of action. Good teachers try their best for quality teaching. They are well-organized and disciplined. They have passion and compassion which motivate students and make learning interesting, exciting and important.

Humor: the ability to be amused by things, the way in which people see that some things are amusing or the quality of being amusing and funny. Good teachers know that a good sense of humour reduces barriers and lightens the atmosphere. A good sense of humor and wit also increase teacher popularity.

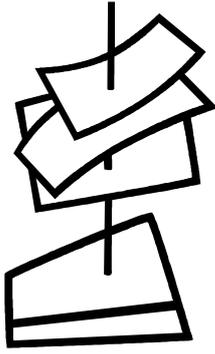
Encouragement: inspiration, motivation; the action or power of moving the intellect or emotions; the action or power of giving someone confidence to do something. Good teachers know that they can change a young person's life by helping them to realize their potential, helping them to grow, helping them to find their talents, skills and abilities.

Rapport: relation marked by harmony, conformity, accord, or affinity; a good understanding of someone and an ability to communicate well with them. Good teachers have the ability to bond with their students, to understand and resonate with their feelings and emotions.

Good teachers are good and effective communicators. They know how to listen and build empathy, and how to establish respectful and trusting relationships with their students.

As Karl Menninger has once said "What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches".





REFLECTIONS FROM *THE 10th METU INTERNATIONAL ELT CONFERENCE: "GROWTH"*

22-23 May 2009

Summarized by
Prof. Dr. Aydan Ersöz

I was asked to represent INGED by giving a plenary speech and running a workshop. The title of the workshop was "The Tongue is Mightier than a Blade". My plenary speech was on "Mirror, mirror on the wall ...".

The Foreign Languages School of Middle East Technical University held its International ELT conference 'Growth' on 22 and 23 May 2009. The conference

was a huge success with Suzan Öniz' and Sibel Tüzel Kandiller's touch. The expectations of the participants were fully met as the conference was academically, professionally and socially very rich. In addition to the plenary speakers (Geoffrey Leech, Gavin Dudeney, Scott Thornbury, Chris Kennedy, Chaz Pugliese, Aydan Ersöz, and Alan Maley), there were about 36 concurrent sessions and 20 e-growth presentations.

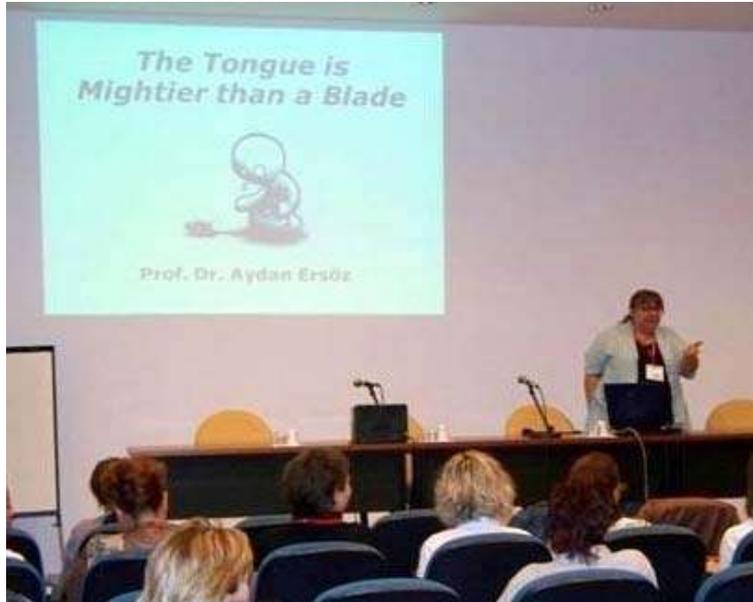


Suzan Öniz and Sibel Tüzel Kandiller handled the organization of the conference in the best way possible. They had the full support of the Head of the School of Foreign Languages and the staff. They were extremely helpful and professional.

In short the participants received a full plate of theory and practice which was delicious and easily digestible.

I was asked to represent INGED by giving a plenary speech and running a workshop. The title of the workshop was "The Tongue is Mightier than a Blade". My plenary speech was on "Mirror, mirror on the wall ..."

The aim of my workshop was to demonstrate the importance of giving feedback



and the language of the feedback if we want the observation to be a part of the teacher's professional development. With this aim, I gave the audience a lesson observation form and asked them to observe me while running a class. Then I asked some of the audience to give me feedback. We then discussed whether I would, as a teacher, take this feedback into

consideration to modify my teaching. We also discussed what kind of feedback language should be used if we want to make sure that classroom observations serve their aim.

A Brief Summary of the Plenary: "Mirror, mirror on the wall ..."

In the fairy tale Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, every day the Wicked Queen would ask "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest one of all?" The mirror would answer "Oh My Queen it seems to me, there is none fairer in the land than thee!" Why does the queen need the mirror's confirmation? Can't she see the truth herself in her own reflection? Is the reflection blurred by her ego?

Whatever the reason is, we can learn a lesson from this fairy tale. Self-observation is all about developing an outsider in our mind. This outsider simply observes us objectively. This outsider is not conceited. S/he doesn't have any ego issues.

Reflective teaching means looking at what we do in the classroom, thinking about why we do it, and thinking about if it works - a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. By collecting information about what goes on in our classroom,

and by analysing and evaluating this information, we can identify and explore our own practices and underlying beliefs. This may then lead to changes and improvements in our teaching. As Ben Sweetland has once said, "We cannot hold a torch to light another's path without brightening our own." Similarly, John Cotton Dana has asserted "Who dares to teach must never cease to learn."



Self-inquiry and self-discovery (not external agenda) are extremely effective in changing our attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and perceptions. Teacher change and development require an awareness of a need to change.

Reflective teaching involves critical reflection. Critical reflection is not limited to teaching techniques, but includes our attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and perceptions. In order to be

reflective, we should be critical. In order to be critical, we should transcend the technicalities of teaching and think beyond the need to improve our instructional techniques.

Most of the time, when teaching, we are guided largely by impulse, intuition, or routine. When we reflect on our practice, we should be able to think on a different level. If impulse, intuition and routine control our self-observation, we cannot critically question what we have done and why we have done it, what alternatives are available and what limitations there are.

The process of self-observation and self-inquiry requires turning on the light in our heart and mind.

Suggestions:

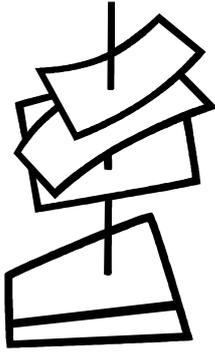
Teachers should be trained to think about

- a. Theories and beliefs about teaching and learning
- b. Applying theories to classroom practice
- c. Approaches and methods in teaching
- d. The content of a lesson
- e. The teacher's knowledge

- f. The learners background information
- g. The school context
- h. Evaluating lessons
- i. Diagnosing problems
- j. Solutions to problems
- k. Perceptions of themselves as teachers
- l. Recognition of personal growth
- m. Setting personal goals (for self -development)
- n. Asking for reasons

Otherwise, once they are hired, teachers will never critically question their teaching practices and their motives for those practices; and they will not pursue opportunities for professional and personal development. As R. Verdi has once said "Good teachers are those who know how little they know. Bad teachers are those who think they know more than they don't know." Our students deserve good teachers like us.





REFLECTIONS FROM
THE 10th
METU INTERNATIONAL
ELT CONFERENCE: "GROWTH"

22-23 May 2009

Summarized by

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School of Foreign Languages,

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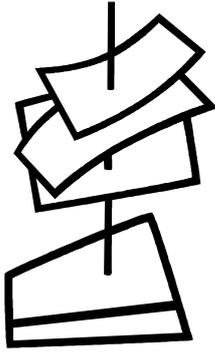
hmeyra.can@gmail.com

On 23 May 2009, I attended the 10th METU ELT Convention in Ankara, Turkey, which I believe had a great deal of valuable knowledge and experience to offer. Its program was so extensive with many selective speakers and a wide variety of topics as well as presentation types such as workshops, research reports and e-hands-on sessions that it was not possible to attend all but only some. One of the presentations that I found interesting and felt that I gained new and important perspectives was Chris Kennedy's presentation called "Facilitating Learner Growth".

The focus in Kennedy's presentation was on the use of a corpus for learning and teaching English. I have realized that as a very new approach, corpus use is a unique and exciting way to gain language awareness by understanding the language, its speakers, contexts and culture as well as to encourage student involvement, interaction and to develop students' problem-solving skills leading to enquiry-based learning. For example, Kennedy studied postcard language, which also reflects cultural norms, and asked us to find out using the corpus whether the postcards that he shared with us have any negative meaning. This question raised our curiosity and turned our attention to the corpus list that Kennedy provided us with to find the answer. First, we examined the use of but-what comes before and after it in the postcard corpus data. We realized that if

you say something negative, you feel the need to contradict it with something positive after but in a postcard. After closely examining the corpus, this generalization was easy to see and formulate. Similarly, we found out that the word time as commonly used in postcards is generally used with positive adjectives such as a good time, a wonderful time. Therefore, the concordances for but and time enabled us to prove the hypothesis that postcards include nearly always positive expressions. Sharing this with students, bringing it into an ELT classroom and even getting students to create a corpus and do such a task can lead to permanent learning and positive attitude towards learning English. It would also make students feel useful as language learners and motivated by getting involved in the actual learning process. Furthermore, Kennedy provided us with corpus data for the Times and the Sunday Mercury newspaper adverts of people looking for spouses. The question to be answered was whether the language of adverts by males varies depending on the newspaper. Two sets of data for each newspaper were examined: (1) concordance for looking for, (2) concordance for seek, so that the language of males looking for/seeking someone to marry could be studied. Interestingly, in contrast to the Times, the Sunday Mercury (a local newspaper) male readers indicated little about physical appearance but a lot about relationships and gave importance to equality or equal status. It was fun to come up with such a difference and see how language reflects the truth about real life, thoughts and culture.

As the last corpus search, we examined job adverts for secretaries published in 1974 and 1976. The corpus revealed that those from 1974 specified the gender by using such words as woman or lady, whereas 1976 adverts had no information as to the gender of the secretary since in Britain specifying the gender in such adverts was prohibited in 1974. This was, once again, a useful way to teach the language of job adverts and at the same time, learn about cultural issues and use the language accordingly. In short, I believe that we can allow our learners to experience learning by bringing the target language world into the classroom through corpus work and giving students the opportunity to make an effort in trying to understand the language as they would if they were in an EFL setting. I would like to thank Professor Kennedy for helping me and I am sure many others who attended this plenary look at English teaching and learning from a new and a unique perspective.



REFLECTIONS FROM *THE 10th METU INTERNATIONAL ELT CONFERENCE: "GROWTH"*

22-23 May 2009

Summarized by

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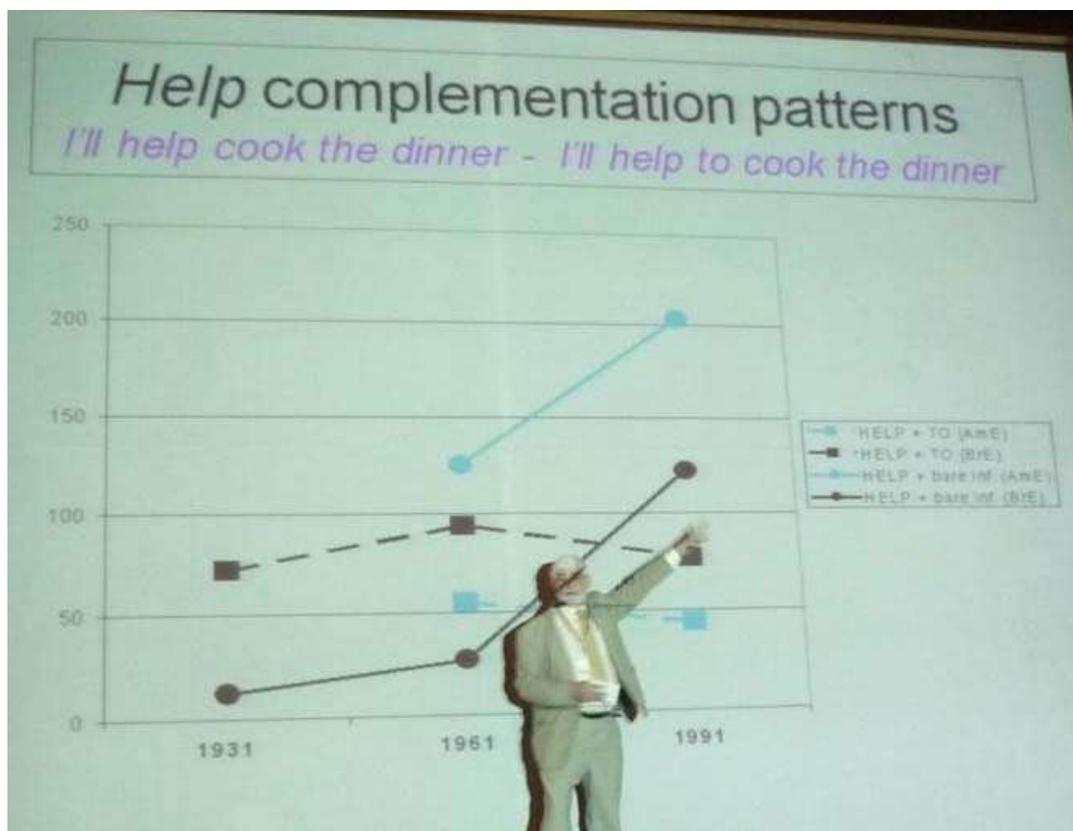
I attended the 10th ELT Convention "GROWTH" held by Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey on 23 May 2009, which hosted a number of invaluable speakers who are experts in their research areas. It had such an intensive and inviting program that it was difficult to choose among various speakers and thus sessions. As an educationalist who attended several ELT conventions, this one was particularly worth participating since it included different parts such as workshops, e-sharing, interactive papers, research reports, e-hands-on, and commercials. Namely, not only it helped every participant find something related to their specific research interest, but also it led them to share their own studies with the colleagues in the field by various means.

One of these numerous presentations, Geoffrey Leech's "Growth and Decline: How English grammar has been changing" is particularly worth mentioning since it

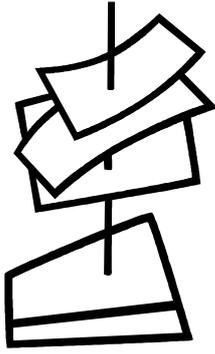


gave different insights concerning the recent use of English language. In his plenary, Leech started with a general discussion of his corpus research findings on British and American English. He mentioned how he had benefited from British National Corpus and suggested that every language teacher should have a look at this corpus before lesson planning so as to find out which usages are frequent in real language use and thus which ones should be selected to teach. In fact, it is quite reasonable to check the corpus since teaching "old-fashioned" or even "dead" words or structures is meaningless and far from being communicative. If we cannot manage to make our students use the target language effectively and communicatively, all the efforts result in vain. That's why Leech insistently repeated the utterance "Look at the frequency of that word (or structure, etc.) in the spoken language while giving priority to the words you will teach".

In his speech, Leech gave us concrete examples to illustrate how some usages which were thought to be important and extensively taught are not in fact used any more. This also disclosed the tendency towards the use of American English instead of British version. For instance, while "should" is insistently used in British English, "subjunctive" is preferred in American English; and people speaking English as a native or second/foreign language have also started to



mostly use subjunctive forms, too. Similarly, British usages such as "help to" "upon", "of", and "passive -be" are in decline according to the research findings shown in the presentation. At the end of his speech, he also let us ask some questions regarding the current usage status of certain words or structures such as "few, a few, little, a little. It is apparent that there is a historical change in the use of English language and this alternation in the spoken language should be reflected in language teaching programs. For this reason, Leech's presentation including his recent research findings and discussion part contributed much to our awareness of what we are teaching and made us gain new perspectives particularly in giving priority to the frequently used target usages in the spoken English. I believe that all the speeches and presentations including the one mentioned above, will help us perpetuate our own professional growth and teach our students to find out how they will use their full potential to be responsible for their own growth.



REFLECTIONS ON TWO *SESSIONS* at *GAZIANTEP UNIVERSITY* *4 June 2009*

Summarized by
Prof. Dr. Aydan Ersöz

Upon an invitation from the School of Foreign Languages, Gaziantep University, I gave two sessions entitled "Constructivism in ELT" and "What makes a Good Teacher" on 4 June 2009. The first session was in the morning and the second



was in the afternoon. Almost all instructors joined both of the sessions and told me later that they were highly beneficial for their professional development. Pearson Education Ltd. sponsored this event. (Please see Issue 2 of this year for the summaries of these sessions.)



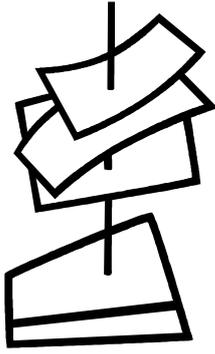
Reflecting on our own personal experiences: thinking of a teacher whom we still remember with respect and love.





Thinking of a teacher whom we remember with negative feelings; and reflecting on his/her behavior.





REFLECTIONS ON A SESSION *at ATILIM UNIVERSITY* *10 June 2009*

Summarized by
Prof. Dr. Aydan Ersöz

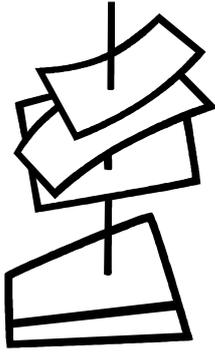
The School of Foreign Languages, Atılım University, asked me to re-do one of my sessions at a previous event thinking that their instructors would benefit from its content. So I presented a session entitled "What makes a Good Teacher" on 10 June 2009. The session was in the afternoon. The instructors were very active and eager to participate the discussions we had. This event was sponsored by the Pearson Education Ltd. (Please see Issue 2 of this year for the summary of this session.)



It is the supreme art of the teacher
to awaken joy
in creative expression and knowledge.

Albert Einstein





REFLECTIONS FROM A SUMMER COURSE IN BODRUM

13 - 18 July 2009

Summarized by
Prof. Dr. Aydan Ersöz

Gordion Academia together with Cambridge University Press holds summer courses in Bodrum every year. This year I was invited to teach a one-week course there. The course title was Current Trends: Theory and Practice in ELT, and it was between 13th July and 18th July.

Without well-qualified, caring, and committed teachers, no matter how improved curriculum and assessments are, how safe and nice schools are, and/or how excellent books are, we cannot ensure that our children get good education. In fact well-qualified teachers are the source of all these. The aim of this course was to improve the quality of English language teaching by helping teachers improve themselves.

This one-week course was for English teachers who want to:

- Improve and / or update their methodology knowledge
- Develop and / or enhance their teaching methods/techniques
- Refresh their teaching skills
- Reflect critically on current language teaching methodology
- Promote greater self-awareness as teachers
- Stimulate their continuing professional development

The course program was pretty loaded but Ahmet Sofuoğlu, our course manager, did a wonderful job to make sure that everything went smoothly and that we got some fun as well.

The weekly program has been given below.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
09:00-10:30	Starters and Warmers	Constructivism, Brain-based Learning, Whole Brain Learning, NLP	Multiple Intelligences Theory	Developing Reading and Listening Skills	Sample Activities	Materials Evaluation and Adaptation
10:30-11:00	Tea/Coffee Break	Tea/Coffee Break	Tea/Coffee Break	Tea/Coffee Break	Tea/Coffee Break	Tea/Coffee Break
11:00-12:30	Learning and Teaching	Integrating All Skills, Task-based Learning and CLIL	Learning Styles Theories	Sample Activities	Teaching Grammar, Vocabulary and Pronunciation	Testing and Assessment
12:30-13:30	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break
13:30-14:30	Increasing Student Motivation	5E Model	Boat Tour	Sample Activities	Sample Activities	Certificate Ceremony
14:30-14:45	Tea/Coffee Break	Tea/Coffee Break		Tea/Coffee Break	Tea/Coffee Break	
14:45-15:45	Increasing Learner Autonomy	Sample Lesson(s)		Developing Speaking and Writing Skills	Sample Activities	

STAFF AT WORK:



From Left to Right: Prof. Dr. Aydan Ersöz (Course Trainer), Görkem Sofuoğlu (Course Coordinator), Sevim Sofuoğlu (Public Affairs Officer), Ahmet Sofuoğlu (Course Manager), and Sila Sofuoğlu (Youngest Assistant).

After long and tiring class hours we deserved some fun. We had a wonderful boat tour on Wednesday afternoon, and a delicious dinner by a fascinating view on Thursday evening.



What can a trainer ask for? An enthusiastic and dedicated group of learners, a wonderful classroom with all the necessary equipment, a supportive administration ... whatever you can think of! I had it all.



**AN INTEGRATED AFTERNOON WITH
Prof. Dr. Aydan Ersöz
at
YAŞAR UNIVERSITY
on 26 May 2009**

**by
Prof. Dr. Aydan Ersöz**

Upon an invitation from the School of Foreign Languages, Yaşar University in İzmir, I delivered a session entitled "TEACHING LANGUAGE INTEGRATEDLY" on 26 May 2009. I did the same session twice: in the morning and in the afternoon. All the instructors were extremely eager to take this chance to brush up their teaching skills. Pearson Education Ltd. sponsored this event.



Unlike history, geography, science or other school subjects, language does not have a set content or a list of topics. It covers everything. This fact troubles language teachers and learners when it comes to finding a solid content for teaching and learning. They tend to focus on grammar as it offers a set of forms and rules. Teachers tend to teach grammar by explaining the forms and rules and then giving students drills and exercises on them. This results in boring and ineffective lessons. Students feel satisfied because they have something solid written in their notebooks which they can memorize and successfully perform on exercises and tests. However, when it comes to performing actual communication or using language in context, they consistently fail.

Grammar is language because without a grammar, there won't be a language; hence, it is central to the teaching and learning of languages. It is also one of the more difficult aspects of language to teach well. It is highly abstract and complicated. It takes a long time to master. Grammar teaching and learning should be incorporated into a larger context. Otherwise language teachers and learners will be frustrated by the disconnect between knowing the rules of grammar and being able to apply those rules in actual communication tasks. The reason is the disconnection between declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge.

Declarative knowledge is knowledge *about* something. Declarative knowledge enables a student to describe a rule of grammar and apply it in pattern practice drills. On the other hand, procedural knowledge is knowledge of how to do something. Procedural knowledge enables a student to apply a rule of grammar in communication.

Procedural knowledge does not translate automatically into declarative knowledge; many native speakers can use their language clearly and correctly without being able to state the rules of its grammar. Similarly, declarative knowledge does not translate automatically into procedural knowledge; students may be able to state a grammar rule, but consistently fail to apply the rule when communicating.

Teaching language integratedly can address the declarative knowledge/procedural knowledge dichotomy. The main principle of the integrated approach is that all aspects of language are interwoven. All main skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) and associated skills (syntax, vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation) function together for effective and successful communication.

Grammar embodies the three dimensions of morphosyntax (form/usage), semantics (meaning), and pragmatics (use, i.e., appropriateness and function). These dimensions are interdependent; a change in one results in change in another. Despite their interdependence, however, they each offer a unique perspective on grammar. Hence, it would be a mistake to teach students grammar only at the sentence and sub-sentence levels. Much of the apparent arbitrariness of grammar disappears when it is viewed in a context, i.e; from a discourse-level perspective.



Communicative tasks where all aspects of language are integrated encourage students to connect form, meaning, and use. They relate knowledge needs to learning goals. They encourage students to apply higher order thinking skills. If teachers and teaching materials provide plentiful, appropriate language input which reflects an accurate model, students can use their predicting skills to discover this specific aspect of language.

In 'guided discovery', the role of the teacher is to guide learners in discovery by asking questions to elicit information from them about use (i.e. meaning and function) and usage (i.e. form and structure). When learners discover the use and usage, learning becomes more memorable.

A Paper from a colleague

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Teaching Critical Reading to In-service EFL Teachers in Singapore

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Let me make my point explicit from the very onset of this article: We ESL/EFL teachers and teacher educators need a critical pedagogy regardless of how minute details about the definition of a critical reading pedagogy can vary from context to context. I argue that, although there is a tendency to neglect it in many ESL/EFL programs, teaching critical reading pedagogy to EFL teachers should be an important part of teacher professional development programs, where teachers-in-training should be given chances to exercise agency in the process, because, upon completion of the training, they are to be agents for change in classrooms (Crookes & Lehner, n.d., 1998; Norton, 2000; Wallace, 1999, 2005). Various reasons are given for such neglect, with the major one being that EFL learners need to develop decoding and vocabulary skills in order to read better. Because of this commonly held view, it is most often the case that the pedagogy of reading is reductionist in orientation, and the possibility that language proficiency can be taught simultaneously with teaching critical reading and thinking skills is not considered. With a sociocultural turn in teacher education in recent years (Block, 2003; Canagarajah, 1999; Clark, 2008; Johnson, 2006; Norton & Toohey, 2004), I also argue that the time when they are in the training program is an opportune one because reflexivity, reciprocity, and responsibility are crucial to their making further progress in their professional lives toward becoming critical practitioners in and out of language classrooms (Zhang, 2004). I emphasize the importance of the critical pedagogy advocated in this article against a sociocultural context where reverence for knowledge and lack of inclination to challenge printed texts are commonplace, but no studies have been reported about how Chinese EFL teachers would respond to such a pedagogy given the sociocultural and socioeconomic change the People's Republic of China has been experiencing since its opening to the outside world in the early 1980s (Zhang, 2001). I conclude the article by discussing some wider implications of such pedagogy for other similar classrooms in Asia.

The Study

Context of the Study

The study was conducted in Singapore, a typical multilingual/multicultural society, where four major ethnic groups, Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Eurasian, live in harmony using the medium of

English as the common lingua franca. This is the linguistic situation in which the participants in this study lived and studied (Zhang, Gu, & Hu, 2008).

What motivated this action research were the observed conundrums or problems in EFL reading classes in Asia. I felt that the teaching of reading could be more interactive if a critical pedagogy were adopted in teacher professional development courses. Wallace (2005) has observed that in EFL reading classes students usually do not have the opportunity to perform higher order thinking tasks (e.g., applying, hypothesizing, analyzing, synthesizing, comparing, and evaluating what they read). Consequently, they do not learn to read critically, nor do they reach evaluative understanding of the text and develop their thinking ability. Oftentimes, students get frustrated and lose motivation for independent reading because they are used to listening to teachers' explanations. Again, as Wallace has stated, students have developed only one strong "reading strategy" over the years: that of listening to the teacher explaining the text word by word, sentence by sentence. Because reading classrooms lack class interaction, students are not actively engaged in the meaning-making process or, at best, the process involves readers' decoding of text. Therefore, the existing knowledge of students is not effectively drawn out for the benefit of the whole class. There is a lack of richness and diversity in classroom activity. Overwhelmed by the pedagogical goal of comprehending the text, the reading teacher tends to isolate knowledge expansion and development of other language skills (Wallace, 2005). Consequently, weak classroom dynamics is often the result.

When I adopted a critical reading pedagogy as a way of helping EFL teachers to become aware of reading as a social process in addition to improving their language proficiency and methodological richness, I focused on how this pedagogy could have been explored by referring to how critical reading is defined. To make things simpler, in addition to asking my students to define the term, I took critical reading to mean that reading is a social process by following scholars in the field (Fairclough, 1992; Luke & Freebody, 1997; Wallace, 1995), where the social context; social role of the author, the text, and the reader; identities of L2 readers; the different schemata that readers and writers bring into the reading event; and the way the text is responded, interpreted, and analyzed all have important roles to play in helping the readers understand the text.

Participants

Thirty-five EFL in-service teachers taking a 1-year teacher professional development course leading to the award of the postgraduate diploma in ELT were invited to participate in this research. They had a minimum of 2 years of EFL teaching experience and a gender imbalance was prominent, with 30 women and 5 men. They came from universities and colleges across China, and half of them held an MA degree in either translations studies, ESP, or English or American literature. Their proficiency in English was benchmarked against 600 on the TOEFL or 7 on the IELTS or higher. They were generally quite motivated in-service teachers.

In reporting on this group of EFL in-service teachers, I make an effort to interpret and frame their response to some of the basic principles of critical pedagogy. I also examine their nascent awareness of the significance of approaching texts critically as both readers themselves and reading teachers. I also analyze the process of their negotiating identities, repositionings, and other related issues. Focusing on a pedagogy grounded in a sociocultural learning theory and critical discourse analysis (Canagarajah, 1999; Fairclough, 1991, 1992; Pennycook, 1994, 2000; Wallace, 1999, 2005) using "community texts" (Luke & Freebody, 1997; Luke, "O'Brien, & Comber, 2001), I take as my objectives the raising of awareness among teachers as well as bringing ashore challenges facing critical pedagogy for ESL/EFL reading teachers in Asian

classrooms. I would like to find out if critical reading pedagogy is feasible as part of a teacher professional development program for Asian EFL teachers. Specifically, I address the following research questions.

Research Questions

- (1) What is the Chinese EFL teachers' response to a critical reading pedagogy?
- (2) Are they aware of the utility of this critical reading pedagogy in EFL reading?

Pedagogical Procedures

Following Wallace's (1995, 1999, 2005) recommendation, I tried to encourage the in-service teachers to take a stance in the spirit of resistance rather than opposition. The two influential schools of thought—reproduction theories and resistance theories—undergirded my pedagogical procedures, as did Wallace's ideas (2005). Reproduction theories critically examine how schooling makes it natural and legitimate for the dominant ideologies to be readily accepted (Canagarajah, 1999, p. 24). Resistance theories seek possibilities for social change (e.g., Pennycook, 1990), emphasizing the way in which “agency accommodates, mediates but also resists dominating social practices” (Giroux, 1978, p. 275). Basing her argument on Canagarajah (1999), Giroux (1981), and Said (1978), among others, Wallace (2005) explained that

“the two models offer different dimensions to a critical pedagogy; the first, providing a language of critique to deconstruct dominant schooling processes (one could add too to deconstruct discourses and the texts they form parts of), the second, as Canagarajah (1999) puts it, offering a language of possibility, to promote social change.” (p. 59)

Thirty-five EFL teachers from China participated in this action research. These teachers had teaching experiences ranging from 3 to 5 years in their home institutions but had seldom talked about critical reading, let alone a critical reading pedagogy. The course was a weekly 3-hour module that lasted for 12 weeks. Crookes and Leher's (1998) work on teacher education, which advocates a critical lens in classroom practice, and Wallace's work (1995, 1999, 2005) on critical reading are both directly relevant to the present study. Wallace has made an effort to classify the orientations to critical pedagogy into three main strands: (a) emancipatory (empowerment), (b) difference-oriented (distance oneself from text), and (c) oppositional (resistance from the margins).

Collecting and Classifying Texts

The tools for text analysis in my study (as well as lesson procedures) included systemic functional grammar and critical theory, as was the case in Wallace's (2005). Preparation and delivery of such a pedagogy included classifying the collected texts according to (a) audience, (b) purpose, (c) context, and (d) culture, and then discussion followed in this framework, as explained below. About 10 texts of various sorts were collected. These texts included articles published in *The Straits Times*, *Today*, *Channel News Asia*, and *The New Paper*, all of which are produced by Singapore-based publishers or media businesses in English. Almost all the texts were of general interest or specifically relevant to this group of EFL teachers from China. One text of general interest, for example, was a newspaper report on the rapidly aging societies we will have to face in 50 years' time; another text titled “Who Is a Singaporean?” discussed sports talents such as Ms. Jing Junhong and Ms. Li Jiawei from China, who, after being granted Singaporean citizenships, played for Singapore in international competitions and did Singapore proud but were the subject of a debate by some Singapore-born readers on whether or not they were Singaporeans. In other words, such a government policy was contested in the report, and identity and nationality in relation to patriotism were redefined.

Implementing Critical Reading Pedagogy

My teaching of reading essentially centered on the following categories of critical reading questions, as adapted from the Critical Reading Pedagogy Questions (Tasmania Department of Education, Tasmania, Australia).

- (1) Textual purpose(s): What does the writer want us to know?
- (2) Textual structures and features: What kind of structures and features does the text display?
- (3) Construction of characters: How are the people constructed/described in the text?
- (4) Gaps and silences: Who are silenced or missing? What is silenced or missing?
- (5) Power and interest: Who are privileged and who are excluded?
- (6) Whose view and whose reality are represented: What social realities are represented by the text?
- (7) Interrogating the writer: Is the text fair? Why does the writer write the text this way?
- (8) Negotiating multiple meanings: What other interpretations of the text can readers make?

In organizing the reading lessons, I followed Wallace's (1999) practice by "spontaneously eliciting responses" from students, organizing think-pair-share activities and group discussions, prompting brainstorming and debates, or assigning a written essay in which they were expected to reflect on their own EFL professional practice.

Results and Discussion

I present the results by answering the two research questions raised earlier, which I repeat here:

- (1) What is the Chinese EFL teachers' response to a critical reading pedagogy?
- (2) Are Chinese EFL teachers aware of the utility of this critical reading pedagogy in EFL reading?

Results show that the in-service teachers' definitions of critical reading were shallow and simple at best. Ninety-eight percent of the participants responded that critical reading means to read critically. But when asked for a clearer definition such as "looking at reading materials in light of the ideological impact", most were not able to offer one. Those who were able to offer a definition said that critical reading was to read between lines to make inferences and generalizations because sometimes meaning was not obvious. In other words, the definition was still about reading that focused on looking at texts as neutral products that carry semantic meanings and texts are just objects from which readers attempt to derive their semantic meanings.

Resistance to such a critical reading pedagogy was daunting at the start of the course. The inservice EFL teachers felt a bit uncertain when I started teaching reading using critical pedagogy, a method with which they were not very familiar. Their understanding was that all texts were intended to convey meaning objectively and the act of deriving meaning from printed texts entailed reading. Nothing was mentioned regarding how readers were positioned by writers, and subjectivity and identity were all intertwined in readers' interpreting of texts (see, e.g., Luke & Freebody, 1997). However, as the lessons progressed, some of the main principles of critical pedagogy gradually sank in. They learned that critical reading entailed going beyond textual meaning to search, contextualize, compare/contrast, explain, and evaluate the hidden grammar,

including the author's purpose, values, and attitudes (see, e.g., Wallace, 2005). They also realized that they needed to put the text in its historical and cultural contexts; taking a stance during reading was essential as they became aware that no texts were neutral. By comparing and contrasting their own values and beliefs with those represented in the text and evaluating the logic and strength of arguments they were able to draw an analogy between what they had read and the real-life world around them. Instead of resisting the critical pedagogy I adopted, they showed more interest in the diversity of methodological options available for teaching EFL reading. I present the following excerpts of episodes of critical reading pedagogy-oriented lessons to illustrate the process.

Excerpt 1

Text: *Two Billion Senior Citizens in the World By 2050*

LZ: What comes to your mind when you see "senior citizens"?

ST: Grey hair, physical disability to move around for food, inability to survive on their own, cannot contribute to society because of old age.

LZ: Do you believe this is really the case? Why do you think the report is written in such a way? What is the purpose of the writer to do so?

ST: I believe so. The writer wants to warn the general public of issues caused by the aging population.

LZ: Do you believe that the severity is really that much?

ST: Yes, because that's how the text says it.

ST: What kind of value systems do you think the writer has when you read this piece of writing?

ST: I am not sure.

LZ: Think of Chinese culture and how the aged are taken care of and how they contribute to society in some other ways, for example, taking care of their grandchildren so that the working mums and dads can keep working and earning income to support the family. Don't you think this is also one way of showing the value of being a senior citizen?

ST: Yes. But somehow I did not realize this point when I was reading it.

LZ: Look at the use of figures/statistics: "Two billion senior citizens in the world by 2050." What effect does the use of figures/stats have on you?

ST: Striking, amazingly fast-aging society we are in. We will have to face various challenges such as shortage of workforce.

LZ: Do you see any social equity in the text when senior citizens are described as a burden and a challenge for society?

ST: At the start I didn't, but I now realize that expressions such as "developing nations fear" give readers a strong impression that developing nations will have to face even worse problems. In a way, it is an unfair statement on the social issue. . . .

As is evident from the limited data presented here, students' views of society also changed because the critical reading pedagogy I had adopted addressed social and political issues and the pedagogy was committed to the pursuit of social justice, as in the case of Wallace (1999, 2005). The students' views of pedagogy changed because critical reading pedagogy was interventional and it was a dialogic process in classroom procedure, where interactivity dominated classroom teaching. This gave the teacher ample opportunity to make the reading lesson come alive (see, e.g., Zhang, 2008). Their views of text changed because they realized that (a) all texts were ideationally biased; (b) texts arose out of social relationships, particularly relationships based on

power; (c) texts related to each other intertextually; and (d) texts had a history as did the discourses embedded within them (see Wallace, 2005, for detailed discussion).

Students' views of reading changed as well. Reading was no longer regarded purely as a cognitive process. The social nature of the learning act became prominent. Reading is doing (Wallace, 2005). They realized that, as a social process, in which meaning negotiation involves other social issues and interpretations, reading did not occur in a vacuum (Luke & Freebody, 1997); rather, meaning was negotiated within "communities of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991), and knowledge construction occurred in a context-specific manner. Learning appeared to be "a process of participation in communities of practice, participation that is at first legitimately peripheral but that increases gradually in engagement and complexity" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 89). This is evidenced by the way the lesson was conducted and the teacher-student interaction took place in the classroom, as shown below.

Excerpt 2

Text: Who Is a Singaporean?

LZ: We can see the inherent power relations in the text—everything is manipulated by the writer to serve his/ her purpose—either to sensationalize the phenomenon, to promote the sale of the newspaper, to disadvantage a certain group of people in order to put another group at an advantageous position.

ST: So, readers are repositioned by the writer, and the aging senior citizens are "Othered" by the writer.

LZ: You are right. We need to realize that our feelings, attitudes, and values are all manipulated by language and its use in various textual and cultural contexts. We are able to become agents of social change in order to remove inequalities and injustice.

ST: But is this still reading that we are talking about?

LZ: What do you think? What's your definition of reading?

ST: Reading to learn new words.

LZ: Yes, you are right, but if we only focus on this level, our critical ability will never develop.

ST: Ok. Let's think about this in our future teaching.

LZ: Where are you and where are your identities in the text? Who are you in your reading of the text? What kind of schematic knowledge came to your mind when words such as "developed" and "developing countries" surfaced in the text?

ST: Poor, shabby-looking houses, dirty streets, and high-rising skyscrapers.

LZ: Well, you see, we all have stereotypical ideas. These are used by the writers for their own purposes.

ST: I did not know that the text had so much for us to look at. We thought in reading a text as long as words' meanings became clear and that if syntactical difficulties were solved, textual meaning would become clear as well.

LZ: In fact, when we read, and particularly when we teach EFL, we have to help students understand the text by asking three types of questions: literal, interpretive/inferential, and evaluative. . . . Critical reading looks at how readers interpret and evaluate the text, which is imbued with ideological positionings of particular groups of readers—favoring some and short-changing others.

ST: Ok. This means, in fact, we as readers were manipulated and positioned by the writer.

LZ: You got it. That's really what we have been trying to analyze in these lessons. . . .

As can be seen from what the in-service teachers commented and reflected on regarding the critical reading lessons I conducted within the critical pedagogical framework reported above, the issue of teaching critical reading to Asian EFL students or practitioners alike is an important one. Any thinking about Asian learners, especially Chinese learners, based on old mental frameworks

of them being like Confucius, could be misleading. This is because societies have been changing rapidly and the ideological change comes along with the socioeconomic change taking place in any given society. The same applies to in-service EFL teachers from China, or possibly in any place in Asia. Just as Said (1978) argued, “when one uses categories like Oriental and Western as both the starting point and end point of analysis, research, public policy . . . the result is usually to polarize distinction—the Oriental becomes more oriental and Western more western—and limit the human encounter between different cultures, tradition, and societies” (pp. 45-46). In relation to research on Chinese learners, Clark and Gieve (2006, p. 69) concluded, on the basis of the research findings, that “research devoted to understanding learners from China, especially in study abroad contexts, would do well to get away from explanations and understandings based on reified, abstracted and frozen conceptions of culture” (see also Zhang, 2003). The key point to strike home is the importance of introducing them to the ideas of developing critical reading abilities and teaching reading critically in classroom practice. Once the students and in-service teachers understand that a particular approach benefits their EFL learning and/or teaching, they are ready to take up the challenge.

Crookes and Lehner (1998) recommended that the simultaneous development of English communicative abilities together with the ability to apply them be taken as joint goals in EFL/ESL critical pedagogy in order to develop a critical awareness of the world and the ability to act on it to improve matters. Just like one of my in-service teachers said after the critical reading lesson—“most often, EFL reading teachers have no awareness of the social issues in teaching foreign language reading skills. The default thinking is that learning to read in EFL is only a matter of linguistic issue”—so most teachers focus on developing EFL preservice teachers/students’ language skills only, including word recognition, skimming, scanning, and so on (see Zhang et al., 2008, for discussion). The way that reading is taught in this critical reading course offers a way of motivating EFL in-service teachers/students to (a) read more actively as a way of expanding their professional expertise knowledge, (b) understand society, (c) do their own share to make the world a better place to live in, and (d) meanwhile increase their linguistic competence. Through EFL reading they also learn about the world they live in and the various social issues that confront them.

Conclusion

Crookes and Lehner (1998) suggested that “critical pedagogy should be seen as a social and educational process, rather than as a pedagogical method” (p. 326) because it is more concerned with how language can effect personal and social change than it is with how to teach language more effectively. Though I agree with what they say, the way I conducted reading lessons within a critical pedagogy framework further suggests that any intent to include elements of critical reading in ELF reading lessons did enhance the dynamics of the reading class as well as students’ active participation in the dialogic and constructivist reading processes (see also Zhang, 2008). The in-service EFL teachers enjoyed it. This suggests that it is possible to teach critical reading and develop a critical pedagogy in Chinese in-service teachers, and Chinese EFL in-service teachers are open to pedagogical innovations that would potentially benefit them.

I concur with Wallace that the most common practice in reading instruction has much to do with how teachers understand the teaching of reading and reading itself. If the teacher and students alike are not confined to the “hermetic bounds of the text, they will not take whatever

they read as true” (Wallace, 1999, p. 109). Instead, they should be encouraged to exploit the text as a means to developing integrated language skills and critical thinking. To this end, critical reading can be introduced not only as a new dimension in reading instruction but also as a potential and possible solution to the above problems often mentioned by EFL/ESL reading teachers as conundrums. Though the critical pedagogy reported in this article was conducted in Singapore, a foreign land for Chinese EFL in-service teachers for professional development purposes, I would like to recommend that teachers in Asian EFL classrooms try this pedagogy in the hope of diversifying their teaching methods and enhancing classroom dynamics and interactivity for optimal instructional outcomes.

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PLENARY SPEAKER



Here are ideas that INGED's dear friend and supporter Michael Berman has sent us.

Lead-ins to New Topics

Pairwork interviews can be used as a lead-in to a new topic, and some sets are presented below as examples. You will notice that instead of the teacher deciding on the questions to be discussed, with this type of activity the students are given more of a choice in the matter. When working with larger classes, the learners can be arranged in circles of eight for the reporting stage, and you can move among the groups.

What I do while listening to the reports is to make notes in two columns, on a sheet of paper or an OHT, of the effective language used and also of the problems that reveal themselves. At the end of the lesson, so as not to interrupt the flow during the productive stage, I then go through these together with the class as a whole. First of all, I focus on the effective language that was produced to provide the learners with positive "strokes", and then point out the errors, asking them to self-correct if possible and to explain why the utterances were problematic. Obviously this has to be done selectively, just focusing on those points you consider to be the most important to deal with, taking the students' needs and level into account, so as not to undermine their self-confidence in their ability to get their messages across. The last thing you want to do is to inhibit the learners from practising their English, which is why it is important not to overdo the error correction. The aim is to promote fluency, but not at the expense of accuracy.

Obviously, if you used the same kind of activity as a lead-in to every topic you introduce, the learners would soon get bored with the approach, and there are many other options available to you. You could use a song, a story, a set of cartoons, a reading text, an audio or video recording, an information gap activity, a questionnaire - the list of possibilities is endless. Remember that

variety is the spice of life, and that if the learning experience you create is a memorable one, it is that much more likely to be retained and then available for recall by those you work with.

Pick out three questions that interest you to ask the person you are sitting next to, and then report back with what you find out to the rest of the class:

- a. What has your experience of the NHS been like? Are you impressed with the treatment you have received here from doctors? Tell me about it.
- b. If you were seriously ill, would you make use of the NHS or would you pay to have private treatment? Give your reasons.
- c. Is medical care free in your country? What system is there in place, and what do you think of it?
- d. What changes would you introduce if you were Minister of Health? Give your reasons.
- e. If you had a terminal illness, would you want your doctor to tell you the truth? Why or why not?
- f. How do you feel about alternative medicine - the use of homoeopathy or acupuncture for example? What experience do you have of such treatment? Tell me about it.
- g. What do you do on a personal basis to keep fit and deal with stress?
- h. How do you feel about cosmetic surgery, and would you ever consider having it? Why or why not?
- i. Life expectancy is increasing all the time and people are now living into their eighties on average in Europe. What are the consequences of this likely to be?
- j. Should retirement be compulsory once people reach a certain age and, if so, when?
- k. When you die, what would you like to be remembered for?
- l. It has been suggested that people who persist in smoking should be refused NHS treatment. What do you think?
- m. How do you feel about vegetarianism? Are you one or would you consider becoming one? Why or why not?

Pick out three questions that interest you to ask the person you are sitting next to, and then report back with what you find out to the rest of the class:

- a. Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of our planet? Give your reasons.
- b. It has been suggested that we are here to be caretakers of this planet and it is our duty to look after it for our children and our children's children. What do you think?
- c. Do you believe in life after death? If so, what form do you think it takes?
- d. How do you feel about methods to predict the future - astrology, palmistry, clairvoyance, tarot cards etc? Have you ever been to a fortune teller for a consultation? And, if so, were the predictions made accurate?
- e. Have you ever had a premonition that came true? If so, tell me about it.
- f. How often do you read your horoscope? Are you typical of your sign and do you know which sign you are compatible with?
- g. "Space exploration is a complete waste of money as it would be much better spent on developing alternative forms of energy." What do you think?
- h. Is there life on other planets - what do you think? And if there is, do you think it is more or less intelligent than we are?
- i. Is our future pre-determined or can we control the direction it takes? What do you think?
- j. Ghosts and witches - are there any legends from your country about them, have you ever encountered one or do you know anybody who has? If so, tell me about it.
- k. Have you ever taken part in a séance or do you know anybody who has? Tell me about it. And, if you have never taken part in a séance, would you consider doing so if you were invited to?

Pick out three questions that interest you to ask the person you are sitting next to, and then report back with what you find out to the rest of the class:

- a. When you go shopping, which items do you tend to spend most money on?
- b. Where do you usually buy your clothes - locally, in exclusive designer label shops, in department stores, in sales, in street markets, or in charity shops?
- c. When you go shopping, do you tend to pay cash, use a credit card, or use a debit card? Give the reasons for the choice you prefer.
- d. Do you buy in shops like PRIMARK even though you know that the people who make the clothes they sell are probably paid less than the minimum wage for what they do?

- e. When you go shopping for food, do you look for Fair Trade coffee and tea, buy the cheapest you can find, or only buy one particular brand because it's your favourite?
- f. Have you ever worked as an assistant in a shop? If you have, tell the group about it. If you haven't, would you like to work as a shop assistant? Why or why not?
- g. Do you buy organic fruit and vegetables because they are better for the environment and your health or do you simply buy the cheapest you can find? Give reasons for the choice you make.
- h. How do you feel about shoplifting and shoplifters? Do you think it makes a difference if the guilty person is poor rather than wealthy? Have you ever taken anything without paying? Tell your group about it.
- i. If you were given too much change in a shop by mistake, would you keep it or return it to the assistant?
- j. If your partner bought some new clothes that looked awful and they asked you what you thought of them, would you tell them the truth or a white lie so as not to hurt their feelings? And if you were in the same position, what would you prefer to be told?
- k. How do you feel about having to haggle over prices? Are you prepared to do it or would you prefer to shop elsewhere instead, where the prices are fixed?
- l. Would you describe yourself as being an extravagant shopper and a big spender, or do you only buy what you really need?

Pick out three questions that interest you to ask the person you are sitting next to, and then report back with what you find out to the rest of the class:

- a. "Travel broadens the mind" or "There's no place like home" - which of these sayings best represents the way you feel about travel?
- b. If you had an unlimited amount of money to spend on a holiday, where would you choose to go, and why?
- c. A package holiday with an all inclusive hotel stay or independent travel? What would you be more inclined to go for? Give your reasons.
- d. Tell me about the most unforgettable holiday you have ever had. What was so special about it?
- e. What can you do, or do you do, to reduce your carbon footprint when travelling?

- f. A luxurious five star hotel or a camping site? What would your preference be for? Give your reasons.
- g. Some people say that the only way to learn about another country and the culture of its people is by living and working and there. What do you think?
- h. Are you the sort of person who plans trips in meticulous detail months in advance or do you book your holidays at the very last minute?
- i. "It's better to travel hopefully than to arrive." - What do you think?
- j. Lazing around on the beach all day or visiting places of interest? How do you prefer to spend your holiday? Give your reasons.
- k. What were your first impressions when you arrived in this country for the first time? And have they changed since then?
- l. When it comes to food on holiday, do you stick to tried and tested favourites (fish and chips if you're British, for example) or do you prefer to experiment and to try something different? And what's the strangest food you've ever tried on your travels?
- m. Do you have any regrets about coming to this country? And if you could have your time over again, what would you choose to do differently?

Michael Berman BA, MPhil, PhD, works as a teacher and a writer. Publications include *A Multiple Intelligences Road to an ELT Classroom* and *The Power of Metaphor for Crown House*, and *The Nature of Shamanism and the Shamanic Story* for Cambridge Scholars Publishing. *Shamanic Journeys through Daghestan* and *Shamanic Journeys through the Caucasus* are both due to be published in paperback by O-Books in 2009. A resource book for teachers on storytelling, *In a Faraway Land*, will be coming out in 2010. Michael has been involved in teaching and teacher training for over thirty years, and has given presentations at Conferences in more than twenty countries.

As for his work in the field of religious studies, although Michael originally trained as a Core Shamanic Counsellor with the Scandinavian Centre for Shamanic Studies under Jonathan Horwitz, these days his focus is more on the academic side of shamanism, with a particular interest in the folktales with shamanic themes told by and collected from the peoples of the Caucasus. For more information please visit www.Thestoryteller.org.uk



**The 44th IATEFL Annual International Conference and Exhibition
will be held Harrogate
between 7-11 April 2010
in the Harrogate International Centre.**

**The plenary speakers at this year's conference are
Tessa Woodward,
Kieran Egan,
Ema Ushioda &
Jan Blake.**

Earlybird registration for delegates ends on 29 January 2010.

**FOR MORE INFO ON THE NEXT CONFERENCE:
<http://www.iatefl.org/content/conferences/index.php>**

The 44th Annual TESOL Convention & Exhibit: Re-imagining TESOL



in
Boston, Massachusetts
on
24 -27 March 2010.

Details:

http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/convention2010

A TESOL - New York Times Knowledge Network online course:

"School-wide Strategies to Promote Achievement for English Language Learners"

Presenters: Karyn Niles and Darina Walsh

19 October - 15 November 2009

This is an asynchronous, interactive course. Participate when it is convenient for you.

Registration deadline: October 13.

For complete program and registration information, visit TESOL's Website at:

http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/sec_document.asp?CID=2028&DID=12623

Course Overview

Effective teaching is a continual learning process and each school year brings changes to which competent teachers must adapt. (Stronge, Tucker, Hindman)

Through this course, participants will explore and apply innovative research based instructional practices that, if used consistently, will transform teaching and learning, increase ELL academic performance, and close the achievement gap. Participants will examine the qualities of successful learning environments vis-à-vis ELL achievement that reflect content integration and higher level thinking skills while creating and fostering culturally responsive and engaging classrooms.

By using current articles, video clips and applying research and concepts to personal situations, participants will evaluate and develop enriching content-based lessons and projects for ELLs that demonstrate differentiated strategies proven effective in closing the achievement gap. All materials presented are easily adapted to provide turn-around training to ESOL and general education teachers to enable your district to meet the specific needs of ELLs.

Who should attend? ESOL K-12 educators and administrators in a school setting

If you have any questions, please contact: edprograms@tesol.org.

SIMPLE SECRETS TO HAPPINESS

- The heart that gives, gathers. Marianne Moore
- Change your thoughts and change your world. Norman Vincent Peale
- If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything. Unknown
- Burn brightly without burning out. Richard Biggs
- Nothing happens ... but first a dream. Carl Dandburg
- It is one of the most beautiful compensations in life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself. Ralph Waldo Emerson
- Sometimes in the winds of change we find our true direction. Unknown
- Throw your heart over the fence and the rest will follow. Norman Vincent Peale
- Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes it is a quiet voice at the end of the day, saying, "I will try again tomorrow." Mary Anne Radmacher
- Laughter is an instant vacation. Milton Berle
- The only things that stand between a person and what they want in life are the will to try it and the faith to believe it's possible. Rich Devos
- Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things. Robert Brault
- It's choice - not chance - that determines your destiny. Jean Nidetch
- Keep your face to the sunshine and you will not see the shadows. Helen Keller
- Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless. Mother Teresa
- Even if you are on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there. Will Rogers