

TESOL

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NORTHERN GREECE

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Associate **IATEFL** member





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A view from the chair

Editorial, September 2016

By Maria-Araxi Sachpazian
Chairperson



Dear Friends,

I'd like to welcome all of you back after our summer holidays, refreshed and ready to start teaching again! I would also like to say that the smell of autumn and the colour of the yellow-brown leaves indicate that the schools are about to start and the swallows are going to leave their nests and fly to hotter, northern places, but the rise of global temperature has made all these a distant memory of our childhood. So, while you are probably still in Chalkidiki enjoying a quick splash in the sea, let us put you in the right mood to start the school year.

It always amazes me that even in summer when our mind should switch off from teaching and think happy thoughts, we find ourselves either planning the year ahead or thinking of how we can use the experience of the previous academic year to make the next one better for us and our learners. I believe that being part of a dynamic and well-organised TA is one of the means to do just that. It is also a way to enrich our experience and facilitate our communication with the international world of TEFL and its trends. This is what we as members of the executive board of TESOL Macedonia-Thrace are trying to do for all of you. Our aim is to help our TA rise to prominence and become more engaging and beneficial for its members. For that we need your help. You might think that members of TESOL MTH cannot do much to help its growth and development, but let me assure you, you can! First of all, you help by being actively involved and participating in our events. Secondly, we want to hear from you. Your opinion regarding the topics and the presenters you would like to see invited to our events can shape our choices and influence what we will be planning for the future. In addition to these, you can help TESOL MTH by sharing our event posts on your Facebook page or on any other social media you happen to use. TESOL MTH offers a value for money membership, but most people do not realise that. All our members can be ambassadors of our TA and inspire others to join in and the gain is double: the more powerful the TA, the more and better events it can offer its members. Finally, if you live in a city or town in Macedonia-Thrace and you would like to help us organise an out-of-town even at your place, please let us know. It will not be too much work for you and it will be a wonderful opportunity for teachers in your area and for our TA as well.

For this autumn, we have planned a wonderful "Welcome back, Day Conference", which will be held on Sunday, 25th September in the Amphitheatre of the Central Library of AUTH from 10:00-16:00. Three exceptional speakers will honour us with their presence. In order of appearance these are: Prof. Angeliki Athanasiadou, Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics at the School of English of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, who will be presenting on *Current research in Cognitive Linguistics and its application to areas of English grammar*, Ms Ioanna Ntaidou, owner of LE.G.S (Learning Gamification System), who will be giving us a workshop on *Gamified Activities using Sticky Notes* and Ms Foteini Malkogeorgou, Head of the



For this autumn, we have planned a wonderful "Welcome back, Day Conference", which will be held on Sunday, 25th September in the Amphitheatre of the Central Library of AUTH from 10:00-16:00. Three exceptional speakers will honour us with their presence.



English Department of New York College, who will also be leading a workshop, entitled *Children have only one path of learning*. These three speakers will certainly give you plenty of ideas for practical classroom use as well as some food for thought on broader issues. It will be a pleasure to see you all there!

One more thing we would like to do is to plan ahead as much as possible, so that all of you can make your own plans and attend all of our events. In the pages to follow, please read the full calendar of events and notice the changes we are planning to make. I would like to draw your attention to the Christmas Event which, hopefully, will have a different format this year. You will find more information about that in the following pages.

On other things you can read in our Autumn E-Bulletin, an array of interesting articles has been lined up for you some of them written by regular columnists as Dimitris Tzouris and frequent contributors such as Dr. Luke Prodromou. Also, don't miss out on the articles by our Welcome Back Day Conference presenters Ioanna Ntaidou and Foteini Malkogeorgou. We're also honored to feature the pieces of two of Ms Athanasiadou's PhD students and benefit from the knowledge and insight aspiring university students have to offer. Finally, read our articles on conferences in neighbouring countries such as Serbia and Bulgaria and find the links to the reports about our own Summer Event, in case you missed it!

Before I close this editorial I would like to say once again how shocked and sorry we have been about the sudden death of teacher, material's developer and publisher Gina Pagoulatou-Vlachou. We have prepared a short piece in her memory which is a small way of showing that her generosity to our association and our cause and more importantly her life's work and accomplishments will not be forgotten. May she rest in peace.

Regardless of the sad things in life, life has a way of going on, so let me wish all of you a happy and successful school year !

Maria Sachpazian


In the loving memory of Virginia Evans



Virginia Evans, the highly successful and well-respected ELT author passed away on 2nd August. In her long career, she was responsible for the creation of many well-known series, and helped generations of students learn English successfully.

One of the many reasons behind Mrs Evans' success was the fact that she lived the reality of teaching English as a foreign language. Parallel to her career as an author, she ran a successful language school, which this year celebrates its 50th anniversary. It was here, as a teacher, that she learned what it means to stand in front of a group of students and what a teacher needs from her course material to help her keep her students engaged.

Despite the pressures of running an international publishing company, Mrs Evans would start every day in the language school, keeping up to date with how things were going with individual students, and gaining valuable insight

into how the material she produced was working and what new direction she might explore next.

In her 35 years as an author, her reputation spread throughout the world, with the books she wrote being sold in over 90 countries. A tireless traveller, she visited many of these places, conducting seminars and training teachers. She was always assured of a large audience and her passion for her work, and language education in general, earned her many enthusiastic fans.

Over time, her work gained official recognition. She was made an honorary lecturer at the University of Wales in Swansea and was awarded an honorary PhD from Moscow City Pedagogical University. Several of the projects she worked on were nominated for British Council ELTon Awards. She was also invited by educators and ministerial officials worldwide to address many high-level meetings on the subject of modern trends in language education. Never one to rest on her laurels, Mrs Evans was constantly looking out for new ways to reach learners. Over the last few years, she became committed to the use of technology in education and especially the way it can help learners who require extra support in their language learning. She envisioned a stress-free home study digital tool, the iebook, immediately after the creation of her revolutionary version of IWB software for each of her coursebooks. Her vision for digital learning later brought about the creation of apps and her digital platform.

Her last pioneering development, of which she was especially proud, was exams for English for Specific Purposes, created in partnership with the University of Greenwich, UK. Mrs Evans always said that "language learning is the ticket to a better future" thus she formed this partnership to increase vocational learners' qualifications and their employment prospects.

With her unexpected passing, the world of ELT has lost one of its most passionate and prolific contributors. As the news has spread, her office has been inundated with shocked condolences from friends and colleagues in teaching and publishing around the world, all of them unable to comprehend that such a boundless source of energy and drive could suddenly be no more. She is survived by her loving family: her husband of nearly 50 years, Anastasios Vlachos, her grandchildren and her daughter and fellow author, Jenny Dooley, who will now continue her mother's work. The whole family, along with all the staff and associates of Express Publishing and the language schools, are determined to see that her vision for language education is honoured and realised, as they build on her proud legacy and continue to look to her for inspiration as they move forward.

Jenny Dooley

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AUTUMN 2016 – WINTER 2017

Sunday, 25th September 2016: Welcome Back, Day Conference

Time: 10:00-16:00

Venue: Amphitheatre of the Central Library of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Speakers

• Prof. Angeliki Athanasiadou, Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Title: *Current research in Cognitive Linguistics and its application to areas of English grammar*

• Ms. Ioanna Ntaidou, Owner of L.E.G.S. (Learning Gamification System), CaMLA Examiner, Master NLP practitioner

Title: *Gamified Activities using Sticky Notes*

• Ms. Foteini Malkogeorgou, Academic Manager of the English Department of NYC College, Thessaloniki Campus

Title: *Children have only one path of learning*



Sunday, 11th December 2016: Christmas Event

Venue to be announced

A jamboree of Christmas Activities.

&

Luke & Friends Special Christmas Performance

Join us for some spiced wine and lots of other treats!

Rumour has it Santa Claus will be visiting!



Sunday, 15th January 2017: Vasilopita Event

Venue to be announced

Confirmed Speakers

Dr Roxanne Giampapas, Director Pinewood International School Thessaloniki

Dr Katerina Kitsi-Markou, Associate Professor, School of English Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Topics to be announced



11th-12th February 2017: 24th Annual International TESOL MACEDONIA-THRACE, Northern Greece Conference

TESOL MACEDONIA-THRACE, NORTHERN GREECE ● ● ●

24TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Teachers, Trends, Techniques: A world of Change

Thessaloniki, 11th & 12th February 2017,
American College of Thessaloniki

We're getting ready for our biggest event of the year, our Annual International Convention! Two days of inspiration, creativity and innovation. Do you have a great activity to share? Are you passionate about teaching? Would you like to meet and connect with wonderful educators from all over the world? Here's your chance to apply for this year's Convention.

Just click [here!](#)

Speaker application form deadline: Sunday, 17th December 2016

A jamboree of Christmas

Activities



A new format

A new Event



Are you looking for a chance to present just one activity but you do not want to plan a full presentation of 45 minutes? TESOL Macedonia-Thrace, Northern Greece is here for you!



This Christmas we aim to encourage members to make short presentations of as little as a single Christmas / New Year's activity. The event will be built around a series of short (5-15 minute) presentations, which can be on the following topics: Christmas songs and carols, Christmas stories (reading and writing), Christmas crafts, and Christmas and technology (blogging). The presentations can be aimed at any age of learners and at any CEFR level. Presenters are free to choose if they want to have a Powerpoint or if they just want to demonstrate the activity.

To apply click [here!](#)

For questions or more information, please write to tesolmth@gmail.com



Members' Articles

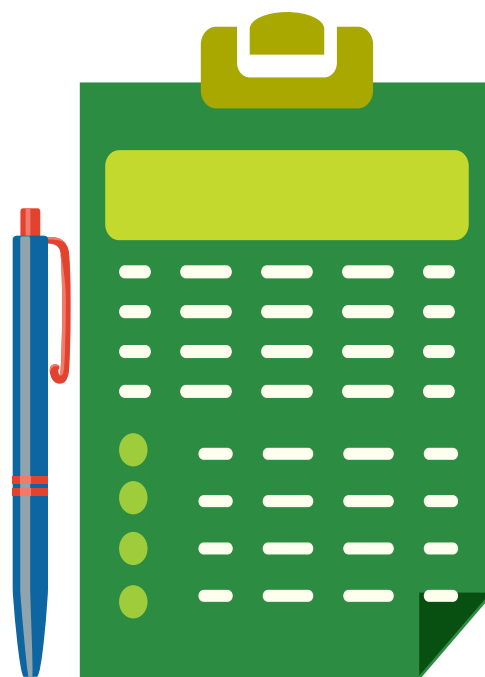
TESOL

Macedonia Thrace
Northern Greece
Members

are invited to submit articles for
publication in the e-bulletin.

Contact our editor, Maria Theologidou
at tesolmtbulletin@gmail.com

submit
articles for
publication



TESOL Macedonia-Thrace members are invited to submit articles for publication in the e-bulletin. Many people have expressed an interest in reading articles which present practical tips or deal with classroom problems-rather than those which are overly-theoretical. Contributors should refer explicitly to sources of ideas and these should be accurately cited and correctly referenced. Otherwise, they could be less academic and more creative and experience-based. Also, if you have the ability to create comic strips,

you may wish to contribute to the e-bulletin.

The editors reserve the right to negotiate with contributors on recommended changes to articles, but undertake not to publish unless the writer is satisfied with the final version. It is the responsibility of the authors of the article to ensure that copyright, plagiarism, and libel laws have been respected.

The views expressed in the articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the Executive Board of TESOL Macedonia Thrace, Northern Greece.

Student Corner

Just send in your articles to

tesolmtbulletin@gmail.com

and let TESOL's publishing team do the rest!

Are you a student of methodology? Then, this is for you!

TESOL Macedonia-Thrace is all about English teaching, practical ideas for the classroom, new ideas, innovative ideas and why not those old but trusted ones. Are you studying methodology as part of your course at University? Are you doing your Celta or Delta? Why not send those reports/projects/articles you've been writing and have them published in our e-bulletin?

What's in it for you?

Well, first of all, it's a way to make use of what you've been writing throughout your course instead of filing them away never to see the light of day again! Other teachers-experienced or not-can benefit from what you write.

Take your first steps in being published.

All the big names in EFL started with writing for their local TAs and still do.

Use it in your C.V.

Employers are always on the lookout for those who are willing to walk the extra mile. It doesn't have to be 2000 words on Krashen's Input Hypothesis or Chomsky's Transformational Grammar or your 30.000 word dissertation. That little task you wrote on vocab games will do just fine!





SNAPSHOTS FROM OUR SUMMER EVENT!



To find out more about our Summer Event, click below!

[Link 1](#)

[Link 2](#)



STUDY FOR A DEGREE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT NEW YORK COLLEGE

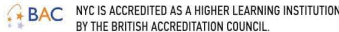


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Great Opportunity for Further Study at New York College Thessaloniki!

New York College awards FIVE 50% scholarships to TESOL Macedonia-Thrace Members this autumn!

Start your TEFL education now!

Once again New York College are showing their support to the cause of TESOL Macedonia-Thrace, Northern Greece by offering five, 50% scholarships to TESOL Macedonia-Thrace, Northern Greece Members.

The process of participation is very simple. If you are a current member of TESOL MTH and you would like to study for a **BA (Hons) in English Language and English Language Teaching (University of Greenwich) at the New York College of Thessaloniki**, you need to apply by calling the New York College at 2310 889879 and leaving your name and phone number. Alternatively, members can do so at the TESOL MTH Welcome Back Event at the New York Stand. The deadline for applications expires on the 5th October, 2016. The lucky winners will be chosen through a lucky draw overseen by a solicitor. The successful candidates will be announced by New York college.

The scholarships cover 50% of the tuition fees of the New York College in Thessaloniki. The successful candidates who will join the BA programme will still have to pay the **University of Greenwich** tuition fees (1200 £). In the fullness of time, those candidates might be asked to write articles or give interviews outlining their experience as students of New York College and members of TESOL MTH.

If you have any questions regarding the procedure or the scholarship, please contact either TESOL MTH or New York College Thessaloniki.

The TESOL Macedonia-Thrace, Northern Greece executive board would like to thank New York college for its generosity. We would also like to thank, **Ms Alexandra Eleftheriadou**, Administrative and Academic Director New York College Thessaloniki and **Ms Foteini Malkogeorgou**, Head of the English Department of New York College Thessaloniki, for their time and support.

Best of luck to all members of TESOL MTH who are going to participate!

- ▶ ELTA
- ▶ BETA
- ▶ TESOL GREECE
SUMMER EVENT

REPORTS



by
Vassiliki Mandalou -
Margarita Kosior
Dimitra Christopoulou
Kyriaki Koukourakis

14TH ELTA SERBIA CONFERENCE

ONE CHILD, ONE TEACHER, ONE BOOK & ONE PEN CAN CHANGE THE WORLD - MALALA YOUSAFZAI

20-21st May 2016
Singidunum University, Belgrade

One child, one teacher, one book & one pen can change the world

Report by Vassiliki Mandalou



This was the motto and inspiration of the 14th ELTA Serbia conference, which took place in Belgrade on 20-21st of May 2016. Learning, relationships and education can be a soul-wearing endeavour much like nurturing a garden. Just like waiting for flowers to blossom, learning takes time and effort to develop. As a representative of TESOL Macedonia-Thrace Northern Greece, I had the privilege to participate in this inspiring convention and get a better understanding of my own teaching concerns. Apart from expanding my teaching horizons though, I also enjoyed connecting with the other participants in this reunion of educators in Belgrade. Great plenary speakers enlightened and greatly helped us understand what best teachers do: they teach people, not syllabi, they cooperate and never compete between them. With 6 plenary sessions (Dr. Helena Curtain, Anna

Kolbuszewska, Dr. Katarina Rasulic, John Hird, Tim Bowen, Mark Andrews) and more than 50 workshops/presentations this conference offered, apart from the variety of choice, the opportunity to enrich our professional knowledge and expand our teaching network by meeting new educators and learning fresh ideas. As Dr. Helena Curtain-USA, stated: "The best teachers teach from the heart and not from the book". With this powerful statement, she reminded us to focus on teaching from both the language perspective and the humanistic perspective. We realized once again the need to enable teachers to develop both their intellect and their souls as they work to inform minds, move hearts and direct hands. The great hospitality and warmth from our Serbian hosts, their courtesy and great organization skills loudly manifested that what is obvious to you might be amazing to others.





John Hird moved us by touching on the issue of teaching students with dyslexia. Drawing on both theory and personal experience he helped us see in practical terms what dyslexia is and how it can affect learners and teachers in the learning process. He also offered tangible and simple tips which are easy to understand and follow in our everyday teaching life.

Every teacher knows that teaching is a complex matter, all the more so when it comes to second language teaching. Taking into account different pertinent models of semantic analysis we managed to focus on the dynamics of the metaphorical conceptualization of teaching through Dr.Rasulic's approach, while Tim Bowen with his review of the various sources of new words and expressions in B.E. and the Oxford English Dictionary showed how, what and when words become memorable. His examples of tricky and unusual collocations, stories behind certain words and suggestions on how we can present them in activities added a wonderful enjoyable note to the conference. Seeing our teaching as having linguistic, cultural and pedagogical aims will broaden the way we see our lessons and help us motivate and engage our students. "When we teach English, we're always doing more than teaching English, whether we like it or not" according to Mark Andrews, who developed approaches to build our students' intercultural skills and therefore ensure the well-rounded development of our students as active citizens.

With a notebook full of precious notes, tips, schemes and ideas, with my mind both broadened and relieved, with a joyous heart due to meeting in person great people, with determined courage to move on and never give up and of course being honoured with the unique Serbian hospitality and care, I can say with certainty that this conference was one of the best I've participated so far in my 15 years of conferencing.

In short, this event provided good input for thought, mental pabulum in my teaching repertoire, and good friends and personalities in my heart.

On behalf of Tesol Macedonia - Thrace Northern Greece a huge Thank you, Hvala Serbia.



14TH ELTA SERBIA CONFERENCE

ONE CHILD, ONE TEACHER, ONE BOOK & ONE PEN CAN CHANGE THE WORLD - MALALA YOUSAFZAI

20-21st May 2016
Singidunum University, Belgrade

Report by Margarita Kosior



I had heard of the renowned Serbian hospitality. I had also heard of the high quality of talks at ELTA Serbia conferences. Then, I found out that the leading thought of the 14th ELTA Serbia Conference would be Malala Yousafzai's words: "One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world" and I knew I wanted to attend. I set off to Belgrade as a proud representative of TESOL Macedonia-Thrace, Northern Greece and I spent a fantastic two days with colleagues not only from Serbia, but from all over Europe. Already in the first plenary session, Dr Helena Curtain set the mood for the whole conference. She explained that we should teach both from the linguistic perspective and from the humanistic perspective trying to involve the head (cognitive domain), the heart (the affective domain) and the hands (the psychomotor domain).

Starting with the head, Dr Curtain explained that meaning is created by providing context and that teachers should move from dealing with topics to tackling thematic units, thus moving away from isolated meaning to communication.

Speaking of heart, Dr Curtain explained that the affective domain involves emotions and attitudes. Good teaching happens when we allow our students to notice and explore major concepts, big ideas, values and principles, instead of having them memorize isolated facts.

What unites it all is the psychomotor element. Imagination and play should be inseparable parts of every lesson allowing for better learning. We walked out of Dr Curtain's plenary full of conviction that teaching is not only about the knowledge and the content, but it is so much more. "We are changing the world one learner at a time", Dr Curtain said. We felt the great responsibility, and it felt good.

Another plenary speaker, Anna Kolbuszewska, presented some of the most recent discoveries regarding the brain and how it manages learning, but also debunked some common myths. Many of us will think twice before advising our students to study in silence or focus for a long time on only one thing they are studying. On the contrary, we should remember that change is good, silence doesn't help, a bit of distraction actually helps, and, since brain uses a lot of energy, we and our students should remember to eat and rest for better memory

consolidation.

Last but not least, Mark Andrews devoted his plenary to people, places and experiences. He started off by discussing with the audience the importance of Malala and her words and moved into the area he knows so well: learning beyond the classroom. We can change the world by showing our students a different way of learning. Getting them out of the classroom instead of keeping them nailed to the desk will open a whole array of new possibilities. By creating experiences for young people, we introduce them to differences in the world and help them learn how to appreciate those



differences rather than fear them.

With Mark, we remembered the highlights of many sessions and many faces, faces of educators who do more than just teach the language, which was a wonderful way to wrap up the conference.

Personally, in the spirit of the conference, I tried to contribute to the success of the event with my own



presentation entitled “Teaching for Social Justice: From Social Context to Teaching Content”. I did not try so much to convince the audience that we should incorporate issues of global importance into our teaching; most of them already knew it. I focused on presenting the ways in which this can be done.

At a good conference you both develop as a professional, and socialize with old and new friends. At an excellent conference you do not get to spend enough time with everybody, because days are filled with sessions and fun. I definitely didn't get to spend enough time with everybody in Serbia. Till next time then.



25TH BETA-IATEFL ANNUAL CONFERENCE - TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH; FROM NO TECH TO HIGH TECH. HOW TO MOTIVATE LEARNERS?

3rd -5th June 2016
Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

When motivation meets its high standards in BETA-IATEFL Bulgaria

Report by Dimitra Christopoulou

The highly intriguing title “Teaching and Learning English; from No Tech to High Tech. How to Motivate Learners?” of the 25th BETA-IATEFL Annual International Conference justifiably sparked the interest of all ELT teachers who flocked in to attend the convention. From the 3rd to 5th June 2016 at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv innovative educators and professionals, both local and international, generously shared their academic knowledge by covering all aspects of how or how not to use technology in EFL classrooms.

Sandie Murao gave the first inspiring plenary showing us the way to “Making the Impossible Possible – Play in English”. Concurrent sessions took place in every university room where speakers’ workshops and talks provided invaluable feedback to all attendees. Participants could not stop taking notes and asking questions for which they kindly received full responses with more information. Later on that day, Zhivka Ilieva was the second plenary speaker and delivered an exceptional talk, titled “CLIL or an Integrative Approach to Teaching English to Young Learners”.

Christian Ludwig from University of Education Karlsruhe kicked off the first plenary speech of the second day, underlining the importance of “Using Digital Tools in the EFL Classroom to Develop Learner Autonomy”. Mark Andrews stressed the necessity of linguistic awareness

with his session called “Ethnographic Fieldwork in ELT, Exploring the Local Linguistic Landscape”. Another thought-provoking plenary by Sandie Murao “Pictures, Words and the Gaps Between – a No Tech Resource for the Classroom” resonated powerfully with our feelings and reminded us of how to discuss sensitive social issues with our students.

Can you share a story? Have you ever thought how easy it can be? With his workshop “#Shareastory” Martin Jelinek mentioned a number of excellent, highly educational methods which can help our learners make their own stories. In his plenary “How We Motivate Teens- and How We Might” Christopher Holmes discussed the significance of stimulating teens’ interest which is the key to success in learning. Gergana Georgieva on “Teaching EU





English to European Studies and International Relations Students” and Zarina Markova on “Pre-Service Teacher’s Metaphors of ELT: The Place of Motivation” took over with their extremely informative talks. Last but not least, Bobby Zlatkov on “Tried that? It’s Real Fun!” emphasized the importance of using alternative teaching techniques in EFL Classrooms. My talk “Let’s Google It Up!” mainly focused on selecting the most effective English Teaching websites to assist our learners with their speaking and writing tasks.

BETA organisers had also arranged plenty of things to do and see in Plovdiv. We had the chance to experience this picturesque and absolutely fascinating Bulgarian city with its great monuments, its Old City and its ancient ruins on a walking tour. It is definitely a city that is worth visiting again and again. We also enjoyed dinner at a traditional restaurant where we tried delicious food catering to

every palette. Last but not least, there was a welcome reception party that turned into a memorable evening filled with Bulgarian songs and dancing.

Having the opportunity to experience the 25th BETA IATEFL International Conference both as a speaker and as an official representative of TESOL Macedonia – Thrace Northern Greece, I was amazed by the fact that throughout the convention all rooms were filled with ELT specialists spreading their knowledge, their innovative ideas and, most of all, telling their own stories. Attending an international conference is one of the best ways for teachers not only to learn about new teaching techniques, but to learn about each other’s culture as well. It is about having a mutual respect for what our colleagues around the world do. BETA organisers very successfully managed to do so by creating a warm and friendly atmosphere with their exceptional hospitality and their positive energy. They succeeded in making us all a powerful team and left us feeling like we are a part of this wonderful Association. Thank you BETA IATEFL Bulgaria! Happy Silver Jubilee and to many years more!



TESOL GREECE SUMMER EVENT, 19TH JUNE 2016

Enhancing Teaching

Report by Kyriaki Koukourakis

This year TESOL Greece hosted their summer event on the beautiful island of Corfu. The numerous guests had the opportunity to listen to and actively participate in the two talks / workshops given by Julia Alivertis, and by Dr Nick Mantarakis and Michael Robbs.

“Follow your heart- just don’t lose your mind on the way,” by Julia Alivertis

This workshop emphasized e-learning, but by redefining the ‘e’ to mean emotion and empathy. Teachers should open up to their students in order to build confidence and to minimize fear and discomfort. Since empathy is ‘the ability to recognize, feel, and respond to the needs and suffering of others,’ we have to develop, build and maintain it through constant exercise in order to have mutual understanding and a positive atmosphere in our classroom. Julia’s three-step plan to build empathy is based on **a)** preparation – students have primarily to identify their own feelings, **b)** engagement – students (and teachers) have to step into other’s shoes, and **c)** reflection and action – go beyond words, enable action. For each step various activities were suggested, from quizzes and the use of literature in the classroom to real-life students’ projects. Julia’s performance of the ‘Stone Soup Story’ (one of the proposed activities) which is intended for younger learners, was a highlight!

The truly inspiring and moving workshop ended with the connection of empathy to inspiration for our students.

“Unpacking leadership: Discovering the leader within us,” by Dr. Nick Mantarakis & Michael Robbs

Nick and Michael, using an interactive approach, presented the similarities of leaders and teachers. By the end of the presentation the commonalities amongst these two were more than apparent as well as the positive influence these have on teaching and class management. In groups the audience participated actively in initially determining the characteristics of leaders / leadership. Subsequently, this team effort continued under the guidance and feedback of the two distinguished speakers, who identified more closely the skills / qualities / goals a teacher-leader should have, namely: 1. Listen up, 2. Speak up, 3. Team up, 4. Look up, and 5. Don’t give up. The elaboration on and analysis of the aforementioned five skills revealed their

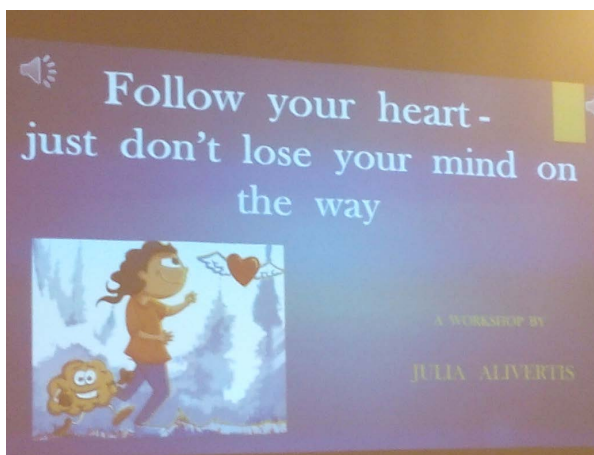




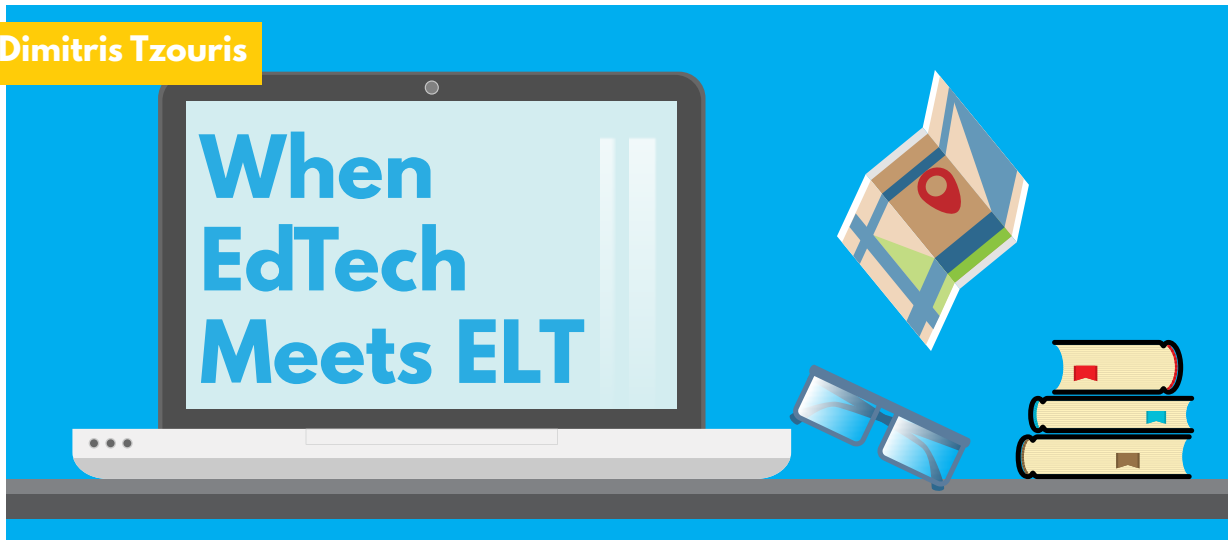
importance for enhancing teaching. The transformation into this type of teacher is a process which takes time, but should eventually become a habit, as Nick and Michael pointed out.

This inspiring summer event of TESOL Greece ended with a fantastic dinner at the Marina of Corfu town and a guided tour through the old town. During this time interesting new ideas concerning teaching were discussed, old friendships were renewed and new ones created.

Looking forward to the next event!!!



by Dimitris Tzouris



About me

 dimitrios.me

Learning agent. Part-time teacher, full-time learner. Instructional Technologist at Anatolia High School and the American College of

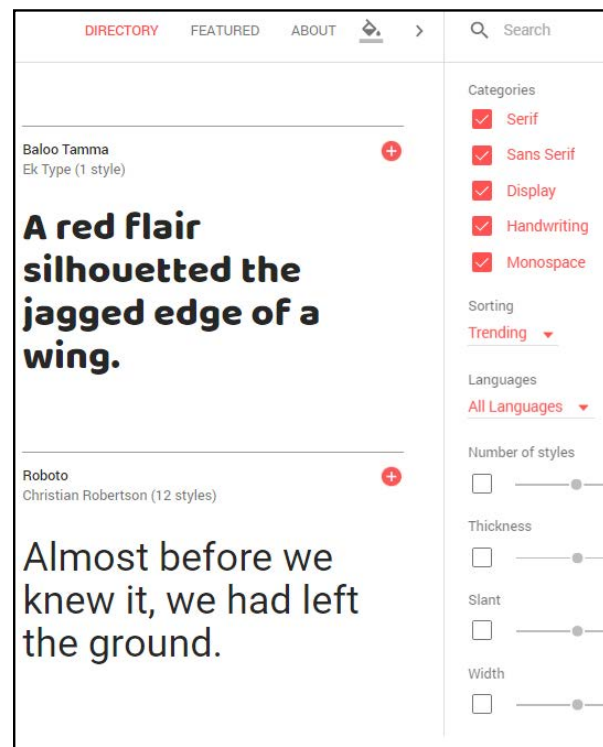
Thessaloniki. Computer Science teacher at Anatolia Elementary School. Advisor on Social Media and Learning Technologies at the American International Consortium of Academic Libraries (AMICAL). Member of the Global Education Conference leadership team. Reviews for EDUCAUSE. Founder of Global Game Jam Thessaloniki. Social Media Manager at TEDxThessaloniki.

Free resources to help you create beautiful educational content

For teachers, back to school usually means revamping educational content. Creating new material for your students includes finding ways to make it more appealing - to make it beautiful.

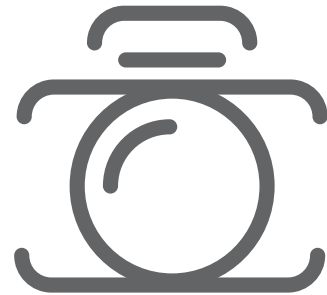
In order to make educational content attractive to students, you should be able to include pictures and nice visuals without having to worry about copyright. You should also be able to choose lots of different fonts, depending on the type of task or grade level. Luckily, you can do both. Just keep reading.

[Google Fonts](#) is a collection currently featuring 804 font families that you can use for free. You can try, compare, select and download fonts, based on the type and style you are looking for.





Pixabay
Gratisography
Unsplash
The Stocks



Adding beautiful images to your content can be done quite easily. All you need to do is visit one of the following websites that have images in the public domain, which means you can use them for free, without attribution.

[Pixabay](#) is one of the largest royalty free stock photo collections, both for personal and commercial use.

[Gratisography](#) is another very interesting collection, by photographer Ryan McGuire. You can use these images for personal or commercial use too.

[Unsplash](#) is also a very nice collection of free images, that gets additions every ten days.

Bonus tip: The website [The Stocks](#) is a meta collection, offering links to many stock photo websites, including the above. If you have time to browse and look around, you should definitely give it a try.

Feel free to share this article with your students. They will find these resources very useful for their projects and they will definitely be thankful to you :)





25 | 09

Welcome Back, Day Conference



Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Amphitheatre of the Central Library



Sunday, 25th September 2016
10:00-16:00



Confirmed Speakers

Prof. Angeliki Athanasiadou

Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, Aristotle University Thessaloniki

Current research in Cognitive Linguistics and its application to areas of English grammar

Ms. Ioanna Ntaidou

Owner of LE.G.S. (Learning Gamification Systems), CaMLA Examiner, Master NLP practitioner

Gamified Activities using sticky notes

Ms. Foteini Malkogeorgou

Academic Manager of the English Department of NYC College, Thessaloniki Campus

Children have only one path of learning



Speakers' corner

Angeliki Athanasiadou



Professor at the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics of the School of English at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in Greece. She holds an M.A. in Theoretical Linguistics and a Ph.D. in General Linguistics. Her teaching and research interests are in the framework of Cognitive Linguistics and, in particular, in the relation of areas of grammar with cognition, the study of Metaphor Metonymy, the language of Emotions. For more info on her work, click [here](#).

Current research in Cognitive Linguistics and its application to areas of English grammar

Language, including its grammar, is part of human cognition; it is motivated and usage-based, and its primary function is to convey meaning. The aim of this presentation is twofold: first, we will place cognitive grammar within the Cognitive Linguistics framework and discuss its basic tenets, and secondly, we will see how these basic assumptions contribute to the interpretation of temporal units. A situation is grounded in reality (tense) and in potential reality (modality) from the speaker's viewpoint. Through this approach, in which meaning is conceptualization, I will consider how time is conceptualized and expressed in the system of English and, in particular, what special role modality has in the English language.

Gamified Activities Using Sticky Notes

As an educator do you want to involve all the students all the time, make them want to learn and look forward to the lesson, keep them alert and motivated and make them active learners? Then, all you have to do is attend the "Gamified Activities Using Sticky Notes" workshop, get a resource kit with highly engaging, interactive, fun, game-like activities and be inspired.

Ioanna Ntaidou



Ms Ioanna Ntaidou is the Founder of The LE.G System (Learning Gamification System). She is an EFL teacher, a CaMLA examiner and a Master NLP Practitioner.

Foteini Malkogeorgou



MA in Educational Technology and TESOL, University of Manchester, UK/RSA Dip ESOL Cambridge. Academic Manager of the English Department of NYC College, Thessaloniki Campus. Lecturer in Linguistics, Methodology of teaching English as a Second Language, and Language Teaching Design and Practice.

Children have only one path of learning

Children's foreign language education presents multiple challenges as it requires from the language educator to address first two fundamental questions; how do children learn and perceive the world around them? and how can they learn a foreign language? Then, in order to meet the children's needs there is a third challenge; how do we, the teachers, overcome the limitations of the classroom?



With the help of Mariloo Spiliotopoulou & Papadopoulou Vassiliki

Exploring the world of Cognitive Linguistics



**Interview with Giota Syrpa,
by Linda Manney**

What is your profession, and where do you work?

I work as an English language teacher in public primary education. During the last school year, though, I worked in the School of English at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. I'm also a member of the Cognitive Linguistics Research Group that works under the supervision of Professor Angeliki Athanasiadou. Our group is very active, and recently organized and hosted the 1st International Symposium on Figurative Thought & Language (FTL1) in Thessaloniki, in 2014. FTL conferences are now fully international, as FTL2 took place in Pavia, Italy in October 2015, and FTL3 will take place in Osijek, Croatia in April 2017!

What made you decide to enroll in a Ph.D. program in Linguistics?

Well, to be more specific, I'm a PhD candidate in Cognitive Linguistics. I got interested in Cognitive Linguistics as a graduate student and ever since, I've realized that this framework has all the tools we need to understand and explain language structures in depth. It seemed to me that if I couldn't explain language structure adequately for myself, then I wouldn't be a very efficient teacher, either.

What is the focus of your Ph.D. research in linguistics?

My research focuses on metaphor, metonymy and polysemy. Cognitive linguists believe that grammar is meaningful and that it is largely motivated by figurative thought. Metaphor and metonymy are two basic types of figurative thought which can explain linguistic processes like semantic extension and polysemy. Since I'm interested in how semantic extension and polysemy originate, I also work with metaphor and metonymy in my research.

How did you get interested in this topic?

Well, we may not realize it, but most of our language is very metaphoric, and we speak non-literally most of the time. Diachronically, our words take on new meanings through processes that are connected to our experience of the world and the interference of our culture. I'm really interested in studying how a word or a grammatical construction is based on a literal meaning and then acquires new senses, or meanings, and how deeply entrenched these senses have become, so that they go unnoticed.

What does the field of linguistics have to offer to English language teachers?

Well, first of all, a background in linguistics gives teachers insights into the use and meaning of the language structures we teach. As a result, we have a more encompassing way of dealing with areas of grammar that are often hard to teach, such as synonymy, polysemy, phrasal verbs and idioms, just to name a few.

How has your work in Cognitive Linguistics field helped you professionally and / or personally?

Well, as a teacher, when I apply the principles of Cognitive Linguistics, I can explain grammar more efficiently. This in turn helps me address my students' questions more effectively, and make them realize that nothing in language is arbitrary or without meaning.

On a personal level, Cognitive Linguistics has revitalized my interest in my work, because it helps me understand language structure and language use much more deeply. Of course, this also makes me pay attention to my own language, and be extra careful with the language choices I make. It has even made me attend to other people's language as well. This may sound awkward, but it is very revealing! Our language gives us the means to express our view of the world. To a large extent, the way we use language has a lot to say about who we are, and about the way we see the world around us.

Exploring the world of Cognitive Linguistics



Interview with Anastasios Vogiatzis,
by Linda Manney

What made you decide to enrol in a Ph.D program in Linguistics?

There are many reasons that made me take this decision. The most important one is studying Cognitive Linguistics which helped me discover how our body and the environment shape the language we speak. The more I studied, the more interesting I found this subject to be and the more I wanted to be part of it. Another reason is the people I came in contact with during my studies. My professors and other researchers were, and still are, a true inspiration to me.

What is the topic of your Ph.D research, and who is helping you with your research?

In my PhD I am working on figurative language and persuasion in political speech. I am examining the metaphors and metonymies used in the first years of the financial crisis in Greece and how effective these can be in changing people's attitudes in favour of a new reality. Professor in Cognitive linguistics Dr. Angeliki Athanasiadou, professor in Experimental and Cognitive psychology Dr. Anastasia Efklides, and professor in International Business Communication Dr. Margot van Mulken are my supervisors.

How did you get interested in this topic?

At the very beginning of the crisis (2009) I was an Erasmus student in Edinburgh University. At that time I didn't know much about what was going on in Greece, but at some point I heard a part of George Papandreou's speech from Kastelorizo and noticed a metaphor, i.e. "Greece is a boat". A few days later I found the transcript of his speech and after reading it thoroughly I was shocked to discover that the speech consisted only of metaphors which turned the whole speech into a single metaphor, a fairytale.

How are you using your knowledge of linguistics to develop the field of English language teaching?

The main ways to achieve this are research, talks and teaching materials. In the first case I work on language data and try to discover how things work. Idioms are an area I have worked on quite extensively and I can now say that I understand the mechanisms underlying such expressions. It is true though that knowledge has to be made available to the public to achieve its full potential. For this reason I give talks to teachers in order to share with them the knowledge I have gained so far. Teaching materials are the main goal I have. I have already developed the manuscript of a book on teaching idiomatic expressions which combines theory and in-class practice. Last year I developed a "learning manual" for young learners of English. This book draws knowledge from psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics and applied linguistics. This year I will conduct the second pilot study on this book by sharing it with a very limited number of teachers.

In your opinion, how can knowledge of linguistics help English language teachers, professionally or personally?

Having knowledge of linguistics can help teachers realise their limits. The more one knows, the more they realise they don't know. Being aware of our limits can motivate us to search, discover and learn. Very often teachers without any scientific knowledge make claims about how a student's brain learns a language, about methods of teaching and about language itself. They teach according to their "scientific intuitions", reject professionals' views and end up with students who after seven years of English lessons hardly manage to communicate in the target language. Having good knowledge of linguistics can help teachers make full use of their potential, overcome their personal limits and become great educators.

What are your plans for the future, once you finish your Ph.D?

It is really hard to make any plans at this point. Things change at a blink of an eye and a tiny change can reshape the future. So let's talk about possibilities, not plans. Once I finish I have the possibility to continue doing research on TEFL, communication and Cognitive linguistics at a university or a research centre. The other possibility is to work for some type of a company -media, political party, etc- designing policies to change people's attitudes on important issues by using figurative language. For the time being I intend to work on the teaching materials I have already developed, finish the pilot study, develop new materials and by the next academic year make them available to EFL teachers.

How to explain the difference between synonyms **BIG** and **LARGE**

by Giota Syrpa
PhD Candidate in Cognitive Linguistics, School of English, AUTH

About me



I hold a BA degree in English language and Literature, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and an MA in Sociolinguistics, University of Essex, UK. I am currently a PhD candidate in Cognitive Linguistics and a member of the Cognitive Linguistics Research Group. My area of research focuses on the motivation of grammatical structure by figurative thought, especially on the role of metaphor and metonymy in the use of dimensional adjectives. I have been a public Primary School teacher since 2003 and have been working as an English teacher for 17 years in total.

As teachers of English we often come across students' questions that are difficult to answer: "Why do we say a large collection of CDs and not a big collection of CDs?". We might answer by saying "both can be acceptable", "big and large are synonyms", or we might rely on our own intuitions as to why certain collocations are acceptable while others are not. However, the choice of the one adjective over the other is anything but arbitrary; each one describes or highlights different aspects of size.

The application of basic tenets and principles of Cognitive Linguistics can prove an excellent tool for addressing issues like these without providing another inventory of rules and arbitrary generalizations. Cognitive Linguistics goes beyond offering another descriptive account of linguistic processes and linguistic structures; it attempts to describe thoroughly those processes that lead the speakers of a language towards specific language choices.

When it comes to the description of physical size, two parameters are invoked to decide upon the preferred adjective: **(a)** the role of individual dimensions in judging overall size, and **(b)** the reference to quantity or number that is naturally associated with size. In describing people, both large and big can be used to attribute the property of 'largeness'; however, they do so in different ways. To illustrate, let us consider a set of examples shown in 1. and 2. below, as they appear in the British National Corpus.

1. All she could see of him from this angle was that he was a very large man, broad as well as tall -- so tall that he had to bend his head over his task.
2. The bridegroom was a very tall young man with reddish hair, a very big man altogether, and as so often happens then, the bride was very small. Her head did not nearly reach his shoulder.

In these examples, big relates more to the dimension of height, whereas large refers to the overall size impression, i.e., height, breadth, fatness, etc. A big man is usually a tall man, whereas a large man is broad as well as tall. The same pattern is repeated with objects, as it is illustrated in the following BNC data:

3. big glass, big table, big boots, big pile, big boat
4. large bowl, large pan, large plate, large envelope

In the first set of examples shown in 3. above, the objects exhibit height or length as their most prominent dimension; this interferes with the interpretation of their overall size, and big becomes the preferred adjective

to describe them. Large seems to be the preferred adjective to describe the size of kitchen utensils or objects which function as containers, where overall size is determined by the interference of all the other dimensions involved.

When it comes to spatial extensions, the interference of all the dimensions involved in judging overall size becomes clearer. Collocations of large + spatial open areas appear 672 times in the British National Corpus, as compared to collocations of big + open spatial areas, which appear only 132 times. For this reason collocations such as large area, large estate, large garden, large field, large farm are preferred, as compared to big area, big estate, big garden, big field, big farm, etc., although these are not impossible.

Generally, size, specified as either height or volume, is naturally associated with quantity or number. We all share the experience of adding water into a container or adding things on a pile or a heap; the more water we add, the higher the level rises, or the larger the container has to be; whenever we add more things on a pile the pile gets higher (think about the previous remark regarding the interference with height), and the heap becomes larger. When it comes to the description of quantity or number between the two adjectives under discussion, large is the preferred adjective to refer to number or quantity; in a sense, the notion of quantity inherently related to size is lexicalized in large.

Specifically, large is used with nouns that depict quantity/amount/number, and also with collective nouns; for example, we say a large number, large amount, large quantity, large family, large group, large collection, etc. Speakers use large with quantity/number nouns to describe the exceeding quantity or number of something, and with collective nouns to describe the great number of people or items these are made of or consist of. In both cases, the adjective large roughly estimates the amount or number and counts what cannot or need not be counted, as illustrated in large number of people, large amount of money, large quantity of fuel, etc.

Although the use of big instead of large with collective nouns would not yield ungrammatical or hard to

understand collocations, a survey in the British National Corpus has revealed 1203 instances of large + group / collective nouns, but only 353 instances of big + group / collective nouns. So, although collocations such as big crowd, big party, big group and big family do occur, the data from the corpus clearly reveal a more preferred pattern of usage within authentic British English texts.

Interestingly, of the two adjectives, only big refers to an evaluation of seriousness, importance or complexity of an issue. The use of large in this context would sound awkward. Consider the following examples:

5. big difference, big problem, big mistake, big question
6. large difference, large problem, large mistake, large question (?)

Big combined with abstract nouns serves to estimate the intensity or seriousness of a problem; this meaning is derived through an analogy between the size of a physical object and the degree of importance of a problem. What big really means in such examples is important, and this sense of big is directly related to our experience of the world: something which goes beyond a norm is hard to ignore, so we understand it to be great in size, volume and importance. Thus, speakers perceive a connection between big and important in examples such as big problem, big issue or big people; this perceived connection between big and important associates the qualities of importance, seriousness or influence with size, and originates in our everyday experience of the world, whereby large in size typically equals great in importance.

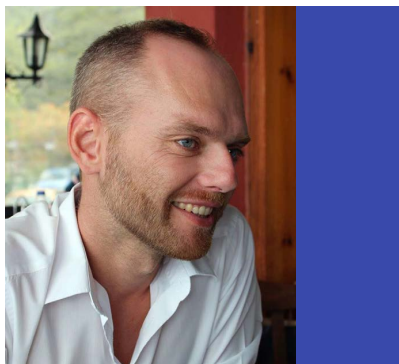
Suggestions for further reading

Evans, V. and Green, M. (2006). *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

As mad as a hatter: a cognitive linguistic view of idiomatic expressions

by Anastasios Vogiatzis

About me



Anastasios Vogiatzis is a PhD candidate in Cognitive Linguistics at the School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. His research interests focus on political speech, idiomatic expressions and on the application of the Cognitive Linguistic framework in the foreign language classroom. At the moment he is conducting research on the use of metaphor and metonymy as persuasive devices within the frame of the Greek financial crisis. He is also developing teaching materials that implement the tenets of Cognitive Linguistics.

What if I told you that idiomatic expressions, such as “all hands on deck” are not simply arbitrary combinations of words? What if I told you that the literal meanings of these expressions are well motivated and make perfect sense? Wouldn't you think that I am “as mad as a hatter”?

The traditional view on idioms is that, with a few exceptions, they do not make any literal sense and that they are “arbitrary sequences of words that can mean nothing at all” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999: 68) with the meaning of their parts contributing nothing to the overall meaning (Chomsky, 1980; Frazer, 1970; Heringer, 1976; Katz, 1973 qtd in Gibbs et al, 1989: 576). Based on this view, it is impossible to understand what their meaning is unless you simply learn by heart the definition provided in a dictionary. This is a widely held view among speakers of any language, among teachers, and even among some linguists.

Invoking the role of embodied experience (i.e. experiencing the world through one's body) and cognitive mechanisms such as metaphor and metonymy, research in Cognitive Linguistics has shown quite the opposite regarding the connection between the form and the meaning of idiomatic expressions (Vogiatzis, 2011). The findings of such research can be used by teachers in order to teach idioms in the foreign language classroom. In this article I will present how metaphor, metonymy and culture can be introduced in the foreign language classroom in order to help students understand idiomatic expressions.

Aspects of culture may help to explain idioms, as we experience our culture directly by simply observing our surroundings and peoples' behaviours. Students find it funny to hear that “it is raining cats and dogs,” while the incongruity between the form and the meaning of this expression challenges a teacher's ability to explain why it refers to a heavy rain. In the 16th century Britain, though, peasant houses had thatched roofs and small animals would find shelter on these roofs. However, when it started to rain the thatch would become slippery and the poor animals would slip and fall down (Flavell & Flavell, 1992). So, it actually did rain cats and dogs.

But it doesn't always rain cats and dogs. In the Greek language there is an expression “it rains chair-legs” (βρέχει καρεκλοπόδαρα). This example is not explained by cultural practice, but reflects a metaphor instead. Our experience of heavy rains in Greece gives us the ability to observe the rain drops. These raindrops, however, appear as a straight thick line, like a stick, connecting the sky to the ground. These lines can appear to be so thick that they are metaphorically understood as chair-legs.

There are many occasions in our lives that we need someone to give us a hand. This extra “hand” can help us not only perform a task, but also solve a problem. The expression “giving somebody a hand” not only refers to a good act; it also displays metonymy. In metonymy one entity stands for another entity within the same domain, such as the human body. In this case, the “hand,” as part of the human body, stands for the whole human who offers his or her help. We want the whole human to give us some help, but we only focus on the primary source of physical help, which is the “hand”.

The idiom “spill the beans,” which means to reveal a secret, is a case of a metaphorically motivated expression. In this case, each part of the idiom contributes to the overall meaning of the expression. The “beans” are located in a container and someone accidentally “spills” them, i.e. causes them to move out of this container and be exposed. The “beans” here represent “secrets” and the “spilling” represents “revealing”. The implied container is the head, or the brain, of the person who held the secret(s), but holds them no more.

Another case of a metaphorically motivated idiom is the expression “button your lips,” which means to keep a secret. In this idiom we can see the combination of metaphor and metonymy. The verb “button” represents the action of closing an aperture so that nothing can get out of it. Our experiences tell us that by using the buttons of our garments, we prevent our body from being exposed. In the same way, if we “button” our lips, we prevent the information enclosed in our mouths from coming out. The lips are a metonymy, as they are the part that represents the whole act of speaking, since this is the most visible body part we use when we speak. It wouldn't make any sense to say “button your vocal cords,” as it is almost impossible to observe them in everyday life so we don't normally notice their function in our routine experience.

The last example I will consider is in the title of the article, “as mad as a hatter”. In Lewis Carroll's classic story, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the hatter is mad, but why is the hatter mad? There is a cultural explanation for this expression which is based on medicine. Hatters would use glue while making hats; chemicals in this glue, such as mercury, emitted a smell that would cause problems to their brain, i.e., Korsakoff's syndrome, similar to those

of an alcoholic. As a result, professional hatters behaved strangely and were, more or less, literally mad (Flavell & Flavell, 2006; Mad as a hatter; Korsakoff's syndrome).

In discussing the above examples, I have presented three factors that motivate idiomatic expressions and also link these expressions to their meanings. Starting from culture I showed how everyday events that we observe, such as a mad professional, can pass into the language system in the form of a set expression. Next, I showed how metonymy can motivate an idiom by focusing on a particular aspect of a whole, as in “to lend somebody a hand”. Lastly, I showed how metaphor can link words to seemingly unrelated concepts based on some form of a perceived similarity, as in the idiom “to spill the beans”.

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Gamified Activities Using Sticky Notes

by Ioanna Ntaidou

About me



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“
The Learning Gamification System (LE.G.S) is a new exquisite approach to teaching that makes learners highly motivated and engaged and helps them achieve their learning goals effortlessly.
”

All educators wish to get immediate results in the most fun, interactive, experiential way and accelerate learning. The Learning Gamification System (LE.G.S) is a new exquisite approach to teaching that makes learners highly motivated and engaged and helps them achieve their learning goals effortlessly. Try out the following ideas and join us at the Welcome Back event to fill up your resource kit with lots of superb gamified activities for the new school year.

Story Telling (Speaking and Vocabulary, Adolescents and Adults, B1 - C2 Level)

The teacher splits the class in pairs (if possible) or in small groups. Then, the teacher distributes short stories to the learners and asks them to read those silently. While reading silently the students (narrators) have to keep notes of key words, phrases or whole sentences depending on their level (one per sticky note). These keys should actually 'tell' the story if placed in a sequence. Then, they have to briefly narrate the story to their partner. Next, their partner gets the sticky notes from the narrator, tries to put them in the right sequence and sticks them on a laminated piece of paper. If needed, they are allowed to ask the narrator for clarification questions. All learners do the same in turns (one narrates and the other orders the events).

Alternatively, for the 'Storytelling' activity the teacher can use a short story from Youtube and play it in class so that the whole class is able to work on the same story simultaneously. In this case there should be as many sticky notes with key words or phrases written on them as the number of students in class. After listening to the short story online the students need to work individually or in pairs to put the sticky notes=events in the right order.

Benefits: This activity can be used for listening and speaking purposes and learners can practice finding the key words or events in a text as well as sequencing

Correct Spelling (Spelling and Vocabulary, Young Learners and Teenagers, A2 - B1+ Level)

Pupils are asked to create an even number of groups with an equal number of students in each (if possible) and name them. Every group thinks of one word with as many letters as the number of students in the team. For example, if there are two groups with six learners each, then every

team has to think of one word with six letters and use sticky notes to write one letter per post-it note. Next, each group sends a 'representative' to the "opponents" so as to stick the sticky notes jumbled on their foreheads (one on each) and then the representative returns to his/her team. When everything is set the teacher says "go" and the groups try to find the word fast looking at their classmates' foreheads, not their own though. As soon as they are ready they place their bodies in line so that anyone is able to read the word from their classmates' foreheads. The group which finishes first shouts "ready". The correct spelling of the word is essential.

Benefits: The teacher can check if learners know how to spell a word and teach collaboration.

Getting to Know Names (Ice Breaking, Young Learners, A1 Level)

At the beginning of the school year neither the teacher nor the students know each other's names so some 'tricks' can be used to overcome this. The teacher can ask students (or their parents if we are talking about very young learners) to bring in class a passport size photo. The teacher collects those, sticks the photos on sticky notes and writes the pupils' names below.

Then, the teacher places all sticky notes on a white laminated piece of paper according to the students' sitting arrangements in the classroom. There should be as many copies of this 'collage' as the number of pupils in class plus one more to stick it on the wall of the classroom. That way all students will have a copy of their classmates' photographs and names in the order they sit. Soon all learners will be able to remember their classmates' names and faces.

Alternatively, the sticky notes with the photos and the names on can be used every time the teacher wants to form teams or pairs.

Benefits: It can be used as an ice-breaker, to facilitate acquaintances and friendships, to create a friendly atmosphere, to help students memorize easily and fast their classmates' names and faces and to form groups.



1-2-3 come with me, 3-2-1 run, run, run (Practice Vocabulary, Young Learners, A1 - A2 Level)

Either the teacher (in the case of A1 level learners) or the pupils (in the case of A2 level learners) prepare sticky notes with one word written on each. The words should be around a pre-taught topic.

For example: seasons and weather conditions (can form 4 groups), farm animals-wild animals-sea animals and reptiles (can form 4 groups), seasonal holidays such as Christmas and Easter (can form two groups or even 3 if you add Halloween), things we eat or drink (can form two groups), fruits and vegetables (can form two groups), objects found in a classroom and in a house (can form 2 groups), things found in different rooms of the house: bedroom - kitchen - living room - bathroom - playroom (can form 5 groups or fewer).

The teacher distributes one sticky note to every student randomly. The pupils move around the classroom asking their classmates: "What word have you got?" If they have a sticky note with a word from the same group of words they answer: "1-2-3 come with me" but, if they have a word from a different word group they answer: "3-2-1 run, run, run". When all pupils have found and formed their group, each group sticks the post-it notes on the board and/or on the wall.

Benefits: Learners review vocabulary through this kinesthetic activity in a fun way.

Social Interaction and Language Learning

by Foteini Malkogeorgou

About me



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A lot has been written about how important communication is for learning a second language (L2). Methodology books have an abundance of ideas for adopting a communicative approach to learning and encouraging learners to speak in L2, but what forms of interaction assist language development and acquisition? Is it the actual production of language that leads to acquisition? Then, how is it that children interact with adults before they even start speaking and still acquire language through this non-verbal interaction?

Interaction has been considered key to learning in general and to the acquisition of both the first (L1) and the additional language (L2). L.S. Vygotsky, the Russian psychologist, who set the foundations for the Sociocultural Theory (SCT), sees learning as the result of a dialectic relationship between the individual and artifacts, concepts, and other people (social interaction). It is a dynamic relationship through which knowledge is constructed. Knowledge is not 'an entity or object that can be exchanged as a finished product between individual minds' (Gánem-Gutiérrez, 2013:132)



The most significant moment in the course of intellectual development, which gives birth to the purely human forms of practical and abstract intelligence, occurs when speech and practical activity, two previously completely independent lines of development, converge

(Vygotsky, 1978:24)



Our understanding of the world, our development, both biological and mental, are the result of our participation and active involvement (praxis) in “cultural, linguistic, and historically formed settings such as family life and peer group interaction, and in institutional contexts like schooling” (Lantof and Thorne, 2006:197). Initially, this dialectic relationship is not verbal - as language starts to gradually develop, it becomes the tool used to regulate consciousness and thinking. We are, therefore, not passive recipients of information which we can learn just by repeating and memorizing it. Learning a language is much more complex as a process, but at the same time so simple if one thinks how effortlessly we learn our first language before going to school.

En vivo studies of the brain provide evidence for several behavioral studies and their claims of how language is acquired. Professor Patricia Kuhl, researcher of language acquisition and the neural bases of language, exposed nine-month old children to a foreign language in a natural “motherese interaction” and a passive “televised exposure”. Their learning was assessed

using event-related potential (ERP) which measures the brain's response to a stimulus. The results indicated that only the children who experience the natural interaction recognized the sounds of the foreign language. Kuhl argues that "social interaction is essential for natural speech learning" and that "the social brain 'gates' the computational mechanisms involved in human language learning" (Kuhl, 2007:110). The assistance that babies and toddlers receive in a natural "motherese" relationship involve tone of voice, facial expression, gestures, and using objects and visual aids, etc. This scaffolding, or assistance, is essential for their development and the acquisition of the language.

Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) considers "adult guidance" or "collaboration with more capable peers" most significant for moving from one developmental stage to the next. The ZPD is the distance between what we can do on our own without help, or scaffolding, such as solve a problem, complete a puzzle, and what we can potentially do but with scaffolding, such as solve a more complex problem, or complete a puzzle with more pieces in collaboration with more capable peers or adults. (Vygotsky 1978: 86). Besides this scaffolding, which is essential for our development and the acquisition of a language, negotiation for meaning (NfM) is also a necessary activity in creating the conditions conducive to language acquisition and learning (Long, 1983). Negotiation for meaning can take several forms; it could be using language to talk about language, it could be seeking clarification, trying to correct communication problems, recasting, and testing their own understanding of grammar or vocabulary. Following are two examples of NfM from a research carried out on learners of Spanish as a L2 (Gass et al, 2005)

1. A Clarification Request

Learner 1: ¿Que ´ es importante a ella?

What is important to her?

Learner 2: ¿Co ´ mo?

What?

Learner 1: ¿Que ´ es importante a la amiga? ¿Es solamente el costo?

What is important to the friend? Is it just the cost?

2. A Recast

Learner 1: No tiene flores . . . uh un bosco.

It doesn't have flowers . . . uh, a forest

[mispronunciation]

! Learner 2: Bosque.

Forest. [correct pronunciation]

Learner 1: Bosque.

Forest. [correct pronunciation]

Negotiation for meaning such as "clarifications", "confirmations", and "repetitions", which could be either made by the teacher or peers, can help the learners to make sense of what they do not understand (Pica 1994 p. 56) and lead them to modifying their output, or production, which assists comprehension. M. Long's Interactionist Approach argues that when learners interact in their L2 what will actually assist acquisition is the NfM that will take place (Long, 1983). However, understanding does not necessarily mean acquiring or even learning. More activities are necessary; one such key activity is noticing. Paying conscious attention to aspects of input, or the language we are exposed to, can turn these aspects into intake, or language processed to be internalized (Schmidt 1995). It is claimed, however, that comprehension which derives from negotiation for meaning can encourage noticing to take place (Ellis, 2014).

It is evident that learning is not the result of reciting a dialogue, drilling, memorizing, learning grammar rules as declarative knowledge, executing endless mechanical exercises, such as filling in the gaps with the correct verb form, and regurgitating verbs. Learning is an active process whereby the learner and social interaction occupy a central place and where the goal is the process and not the production of the language itself. What will be learnt in most cases may be unpredictable. However, the decisions on the content, the level, the design of the activities/tasks are for the teachers to make.

General design considerations of pedagogical tasks

Vygotsky's ZPD can inform the design of pedagogical tasks that we as language educators set out to assign to our learners. The tasks need to be manageable, a little beyond what the learners can do independently so that with some scaffolding they would be able to attain the goal of the task and complete it. A pre-task with a simpler problem to be attained could help. This assistance could be given by the teacher or by peers. Tasks can be designed to

encourage teacher–learner interaction or learner–learner interaction or both, depending on what they can manage cognitively and linguistically. A task is not a mechanical exercise, a task in Task Based Learning (TBL) has received many definitions; however, they all tend to agree that a task focuses primarily on meaning, that there is a goal to be attained (Skehan, 1996, 2003); there is for instance a gap of information that needs to be filled, or a solution to be reached. The language is the means used to achieve the goal (Ellis, 2014). It is important that the aim is not language performance, it is achieving the goal, or solving the problem, for instance.

The tasks should create opportunities for active involvement of the learners. They should promote collaboration of small groups or pairs in which case the scaffolding is collaborative (Donato, 2000). They should also offer opportunities for negotiation for meaning to take place. Research has indicated that when supportive interactions took place, in most cases the learners agreed on the correct forms. It has been suggested that post-tasks or follow-up should be included to help learners check the accuracy of their language decisions (Guk and Kellogg, 2007). Through this type of interaction the learners construct meaning for themselves, which in turn helps them move toward achieving the goal. Their aim is to achieve the goal of the task and not their performance of language. Language is the means by which the objective is realized and NfM is that interaction that can help them acquire or develop language.

The goal of the task could be a gap of information that needs to be filled, a problem that needs to be solved, a decision that needs to be made followed by reasoning, or an opinion that should be articulated in a debate. Learners are given information that they need to use in order to achieve the task. There are tasks which aim to draw attention to form; these are focused tasks and those which do not do so are unfocused tasks. The unfocused tasks mainly aim at incidental learning and implicit, or unconscious knowledge. It is generally believed that most language learning happens incidentally (Ellis, 2014; Long, 2014). In unfocused tasks the learning which takes place is unpredictable. Incidental learning is very important as a learner cannot acquire native-like language competence as a result of intentional learning or of being exposed to

explicit teaching (Ellis, 2004) simply because there is no time.

As an educator and language teacher, I have seen that learners really enjoy being involved in their learning and in such tasks. They develop and acquire new language, but most importantly they find their own way into learning. I personally also incorporate information technology, and aim to expose them to multisensory input.

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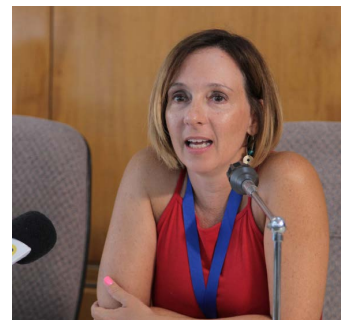
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The DysTEFL2 project: A glance into Greek EFL teachers' needs regarding dyslexia

by Marina Mattheoudakis,
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Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty that has an effect not only on literacy skills in students' first language, but also on foreign language learning. In order to ensure that students with dyslexia successfully acquire necessary levels of foreign language competence, they need additional support. However, they do not usually receive any specialized help and tutoring in foreign language learning. This may result from the fact that their language teachers may not be sufficiently aware of the nature of dyslexic problems and may not be equipped with competences which allow to successfully teach foreign languages to these students. Therefore, there is a need to support English Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and provide them with continuing professional development (CPD) activities, including workshops, conferences and teacher development courses.

DysTEFL2 is an Erasmus+ project, which ran between 2013 and 2016 and is a continuation of the Comenius Multilateral Project (2009-2012). In fact, DysTEFL 2 aimed at upgrading and enriching the initial DysTEFL course. In particular, the material was modified and updated, a series of tests and quizzes were designed and multiplier events were organized in order to promote the dissemination of the DysTEFL2 materials.

In order to better address the EFL teachers' needs, we designed and carried out a survey aiming to investigate Greek EFL teachers' background knowledge about dyslexia as well as their needs concerning the teaching of English to learners with dyslexia. The survey was conducted in 2014-2015 through a semi-structured questionnaire and 352 teachers participated in the survey. All the participants were EFL teachers working in various geographical regions in Greece.

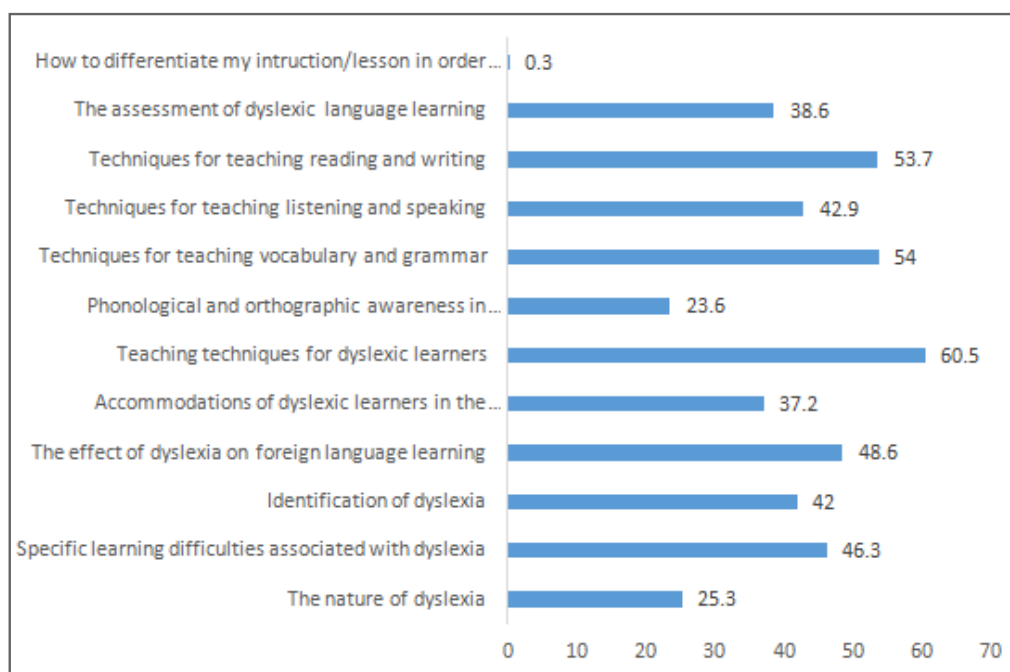


Figure 1. Teachers' preferences for course modules on dyslexia

Participants' profile

The vast majority of the participants (80%) were female while only 5% were male. 14.5% of the participants did not provide a relevant answer. With regard to their age, this ranged between 31 and 51 years. With regard to the sector of education where the participants work, 70% stated that they work in primary education, 14% in lower secondary education and 9% in upper secondary education.

Most of the participants (37%) have more than 20 years of experience as EFL teachers while 33% had been working for 11-20 years. Fewer teachers (13%) have 6-11 years of experience and another 13% up to 5 years. The majority of the participants (63%) stated that they had not attended any specialized courses on teaching EFL to students with dyslexia.

Results

With respect to the teachers' background knowledge regarding dyslexia, 60% stated that they had had no training in dyslexia in general while the vast majority of the participants (66.5%) stated that they had not attended any class on teaching EFL to students with dyslexia. Similarly, the majority of the participants (72%) stated that they had not received any certification in teaching

students with dyslexia or in teaching EFL students with dyslexia.

As probably expected, most of the participants claimed that they had students with dyslexia in their classes (57%), 12.5% were not sure about it, while 4% answered negatively. As can be seen, very few teachers appear to have previous knowledge or training in dyslexia although most of them have to deal with students with dyslexia in their EFL classes. Consequently, it is not surprising that 64% of the participants expressed their interest in being trained in teaching EFL to students with dyslexia. Moreover, 50% of the participants would like to attend an advanced course in teaching EFL to students with dyslexia.

The questionnaire required teachers to express preferences with regard to the type and content of an advanced training course. Views varied between a 5-day intensive course, one-day training event and a semester course. Most of them (36%) prefer blended courses (both distance and on site) and on site courses (face to face) (31.3%). 51.4% of the participants in the research stated that they would like the DysTEFL course to lead to a type of certification that would qualify them to teach students with dyslexia. In particular, 42% of the respondents said that they would like the certification to concern a

particular level of education (e.g. primary, secondary, tertiary). The majority of the participants (42%) require certification for teaching in primary education while fewer teachers (26%) stated that they would like it to address secondary school and tertiary education learners (only 4%).

With regard to the content of the course, 27% of those who provided an answer stated that they would prefer mainly a course with a practical orientation including materials, techniques and practical tips. As for the modules of the training events, 60.5% of the participants would like a module on teaching techniques for dyslexic learners, 53.7% expressed their preference for a module on techniques for teaching reading and writing, 48.6% appear to need a module on the effect of dyslexia on foreign language learning, 46.3% opted for a module on specific learning difficulties associated with dyslexia and finally, 42.9% stated that they would like a module on techniques for teaching listening and speaking (Figure 1).

Discussion and conclusion

Based on the results above, there are certain findings that can be highlighted: First, EFL teachers in Greece appear to lack background knowledge and training regarding learners with dyslexia even though, the majority of them mentioned that they have students with dyslexia in their classrooms. As expected, a need for specialized training as well as for certified knowledge in this area emerges, as this has been emphasized by the teachers themselves. Based on their specific responses, it is interesting to note that teachers emphasize their need to attend practical rather than theoretical modules with specific reference to strategies, techniques and tips to help them in their daily teaching practice.

Based on the teacher's responses, the DysTEFL project organized five-day face-to-face courses on teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to learners with dyslexia. The main aims of the courses were for EFL teachers to gain the necessary theoretical knowledge on dyslexia, as well as develop strategies, competences and skills to adapt their teaching to special educational needs of students with dyslexia. The courses were based on the principles of learning-by-doing and of experiential learning.

Four intensive staff training courses have been organized: in Thessaloniki (Greece), Lubljana (Slovenia) and Opole (Poland), for 15 international trainees each. The project ended with the training course in Łódź (Poland) in June 2016.

The aim of DysTEFL2 project was to improve the scheme of initial training and continuing professional development of teachers of English as a foreign language so that teachers can gain the necessary knowledge, strategies, competences and skills to adapt their teaching to special educational needs of students with dyslexia. The training materials of the project acquaint foreign language teachers with a wide repertoire of useful teaching methods, techniques and tools so that the quality and effectiveness of foreign language teaching to students with dyslexia can be enhanced.

FROM SOCRATES TO SUGATA MITRA: A DIALOGUE WITH DIGITAL NATIVES

Part 2 – a critical response to digital technology
in education

“ *Where is the wisdom
We have lost in knowledge
Where is the knowledge
We have lost in information?*

T.S.Eliot

”

In this article, I summarise the positive ways in which digital technology has shaped our teaching and our lives in the 21st century before going on to make a few critical comments on the digital revolution, from a pedagogic and personal perspective. It is because the changes that we have seen in the last 30 years are indeed revolutionary, and far-reaching, penetrating nearly every aspect of our lives, that it is important to engage with the implications of this revolution in an open and inquiring manner. Not only will critical engagement with the effects of technology allow us to make the most of the opportunities it offers as classroom practitioners, but will also make us alert to its possible dangers in the classroom and outside the classroom. I will end with a sketch of a possible way forward in the 21st century classroom.

Digital learning: why it's a good thing

In the first part of this article, we saw how predictions have been made that education would go digital by the early part of the 21st century: mobile devices, tablet teaching and apps, it was expected, would be an integral part of mainstream teaching worldwide, from 'Kindergarten through twelve' (1). As I write (2016), this prediction has yet to be fulfilled in any countries, apart from a few (eg Uruguay, the Basic Information Educational Program for Online Learning (CEIBAL), which aims to provide all public primary school students and teachers with free laptop access). Hardware and software producers do their best to make the switch to digital education tempting and irresistible and the future may well be 'owned' by digital technology and its creators (2).

Most teachers nowadays acknowledge the necessity of incorporating digital technology into their teaching; technology enables teachers to do things in the classroom to enhance their teaching which were impossible in the past; many of the activities valued in traditional teaching can also be done much more easily and efficiently.



About me

Luke Prodromou graduated from Bristol University and has an MA in Shakespeare Studies (Birmingham University) a Diploma in Teaching English (Leeds University, with distinction) and a Ph.D (Nottingham University). He has been a plenary speaker at many international conferences in Europe and Latin America, including IATEFL, UK. Luke is a founder member of Disabled Access Friendly Campaign for which he wrote - and performed, with D. Gibson - the 'Wheelchair Sketch' (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6TxkEOkxt8>). He was a member of the theatre group: Dave'n'Luke English Language Theatre (<https://davenluke.wordpress.com/>) and now performs as Luke and friends: English Language Theatre. He is the author, with Lindsay Clandfield of the award-winning handbook for teachers, Dealing with Difficulties. He has also written 20 or so coursebooks, including: Jackpot, Smash, Flash on and The Longman First Grammar and Vocabulary. He gives talks and performances related to Shakespeare and Dickens, their life, work and relevance to issues of modern times (gender equality, globalization, power and the financial crisis et al).

For example, it is so much easier and quicker nowadays to prepare materials for students, to store them, adapt them and make access to them available to all students; tests can be produced and graded more easily; students can collaborate and share with their classmates in the same room and in other classrooms anywhere in the world; Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs) enable interactivity of various kinds. Tzouris (3) (2016) explains how Netflix enables students to immerse themselves in watching films in English, with or without English subtitles, whenever they like, wherever they like. This is a good example of the way digital technology facilitates an activity which teachers and students did in the past – learning from films in the target language – and does it better.

The wide variety of screen-based activities is undeniable; the question is: does it all help us to achieve the twin objectives of motivating students and encouraging second language acquisition?

Research evidence

There is some research that suggests learning is enhanced by the use of such technology, especially when combined with traditional practices (4); for instance, some of these research findings suggest that the creative use of Interactive Whiteboards enhances engagement in language learning (5): editing photos, audio-files and film-clips and adding a script in English to visual material can be very motivating; the question remains, however: is the motivation sustainable and does it actually promote second language acquisition - and how does one measure that?

Warschauer and Liaw (6) review research that suggests 'new technologies provide more tools than ever before for adult learners to hone their language skills through autonomous reading, listening, writing, and interaction'. Warschauer and Liaw focus particularly on the evidence for a positive impact of online resources on student autonomy; they refer to the successful use of a wide range of online applications used in ELT for promoting learner independence: podcasts for listening comprehension and pronunciation; blogging and wikis for collaborative and interactive writing; fanfiction.net for the social nature of writing; concordancing for increasing vocabulary and collocational awareness; second life/avatars for integrating several online applications and developing a wide range of language skills and multi-player games for

enriching vocabulary.

Critical dialogue with IT

Thus, both in principle and practice, we can acknowledge the importance of the digital revolution: its importance means it deserves to be engaged with and understood in terms of its powerful effects and unintended side-effects, in the classroom and in our personal relationships (7).

In this part of the article, we dig deeper into the arguments for digital education from a critical pedagogic perspective; by 'critical' I mean an approach which asks questions about where ideas come from and whose interests they serve, especially as regards power: who has it and what do they do with it?

The oldest approach for fostering critical thinking in education and in life is Socratic teaching, with its dialogic procedures and search for 'virtue' (arete). In Socratic teaching, the focus is on asking questions, and through dialogue, finding answers to what constitutes the good life: what is right, what is wrong. In the case of ELT, 'virtue' can be translated as when a certain educational practice is 'good' for the students or not: does it help or hinder language acquisition and does it make learning a motivating process of personal fulfillment?

In modern times, the Socratic tradition finds its full political flowering in the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire, the great Brazilian educator; Freire explores ways in which educational practice can raise awareness of relations of power in the classroom and in society, leading to action to transform society towards greater equality and liberation (8). Freire's prioritizing of learner input in the educational process, as a step towards raising awareness of the political implications of schooling, will be a useful framework, along with Socratic moral questioning, in our quest for digital 'virtue' – or the strong points of information technology in the classroom.

Is there a question of vested interests?

A critical engagement with digital pedagogy will thus involve questioning on two levels: first, we ask: what evidence is there for the claims made that learning is enhanced by IT? And, secondly, what does the technology mean for power relations in the classroom - and outside? Let's take the case of the New Media Consortium

(NMC), which, as we have seen, investigates and makes predictions about the growth of digital education and its positive impact. If we look up the NMC on Wikipedia, we discover that major donors to the Consortium are the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Bill Gates, as we all know, has invested a great deal in the development of digital software and hardware and, as a result, has become one of the richest individuals in history. Of course, the fact that someone stands to make a profit from the latest technology does not mean that the technology doesn't have a useful role to play in the classroom or elsewhere. After all, Thomas Edison, no doubt made a profit out of the lightbulb – this doesn't cancel out the usefulness of the lightbulb in the classroom and in life! (9). Indeed, in ELT, stakeholders such as publishers and media manufacturers have always profited from the supply of learning materials and equipment; nothing new there. We could add that in the past, despite individual differences, all students used pen and paper and textbooks on the assumption that 'one size fits all' – and it can plausibly be argued that IT is potentially more capable than pen, paper and textbooks, of responding to students' needs.

However, what the overlap of educational opinions and financial interests does mean is that we teachers - who are at the receiving end of these opinions - should question them critically, just as in the past we questioned the role of textbooks; we will bear the brunt of the changes on a day-to-day basis so we have the right - and obligation- to 'interrogate' those who would introduce radical innovation into our practice. This critical approach is in the best tradition of teacher development, which encourages teachers to have an inquiring mind, as well as to continue to grow professionally. Thus, one level of critical engagement with the claims made on behalf of digital pedagogy, is to query where the claims are coming from, to put the claims into context: who is making them and why? Are they impartial educators furthering the aims of education or are they speaking on behalf of a particular set of interests, for example economic or ideological interests?

Wants and Needs

To take another example: in the first part of this article, we saw how the man who coined the term 'digital natives', Mark Prensky, suggested that 'teachers who are 'digital immigrants' are unable to relate to their students affinity

with ICT...!' (10). Prensky makes a bold assertion that on the surface seems plausible and designed to encourage teachers to grow in the direction of where their students are at: they are at home with digital technology and teachers should join them. Prensky advises digital immigrant teachers to 'stop grousing' and 'just do it', (like any good users of NIKE sports shoes?). They should accommodate to the digital natives' way of getting and processing information or risk missing the educational boat.

Before teachers agree to do this, however, they are entitled to ask for evidence that the use of technology in the classroom is actually having a positive impact on students' learning. Enthusiasm for the frequent and ubiquitous use of technology should not be accepted as the sole basis for serious educational practice.

Prensky's assertions assume that non-digital teachers get in the way of learning and that technology is a Do-IT-Yourself (DIY) approach to education in which traditional teachers may be redundant. He also seems to assume that the teacher's role is to do what learners want – otherwise they risk getting left behind: students like social media and computer games, therefore, the classroom should include them, Prensky seems to be saying.

But teachers have always done more than respond to students' wants: their job, traditionally, as 'experts' or 'knowers' (reactionary though these roles may sound in a learner-centred age), has been to use their expertise and knowledge to meet students' needs, as well as take their wants into account. Teachers, for example, – if they are present in the learning process – will not only use web.2 activities, which presumably (but not necessarily) students want to do (because they are digital natives) but they will also, for instance, monitor their students' progress and, where appropriate, correct and make use of their errors to further their knowledge and acquisition of English. These teacher 'behaviours' will respond more to students' needs than their wants, as few students, one imagines, want to be 'monitored' and 'corrected' by adults!

Bax, in his response to Prensky (11), writes that Prensky's claim that educators should simply alter their approach to suit young people who are 'digital natives', ignores essential elements of the nature of learning and good pedagogy. The 'needs' that Bax refers to are: modelling of language, scaffolding and challenging students – all things students probably need for effective learning to

take place but may not want.

Is there a political question?

Prensky's ideas have thus been challenged on a pedagogic level but less so on a political or ideological level; so let us dig a little deeper into the ideological context in which Prensky's 2001 article on 'digital natives' - 'On the Horizon' - was written. Here is an extract from Prensky's Wikipedia entry:

'Prensky began his career as a teacher in Harlem, New York. He has taught in elementary school, high school and college. He worked for six years (1981-1987) as a corporate strategist and product development director with the Boston Consulting Group, and six years (1993-1999) for Bankers Trust on Wall St...'

From this, we discover that Prensky is coming from both an educational and business background. The statements about digital natives and digital immigrants, for which Prensky is best known, (that teachers who are not digital natives are 'unable to relate to their students' affinity with ICT'), were made at the time when Prensky had already been working for 20 years as a corporate strategist, product developer and advisor to bankers on Wall Street. This does not mean, as I have already pointed out, that a market-oriented and Wall Street - employed business entrepreneur is incapable of putting forward useful educational ideas, as we have seen Bill Gates and Tony Blair doing earlier in this article. These education-and-business connections do suggest however, that we should, at least, be asking where Prensky is coming from in the debate over digital education - just in case his educational passions are clouded in any way by his business commitments. It also has to do with the nature of 'expertise': Where does Prensky get his authority from? On whose behalf does he exercise this authority? How can we challenge this authority and the policies it promotes in collaboration with Ministries of Education and a market-driven private sector?

Criticisms of the Hole-in-the-Wall

Another highly influential educational movement in recent years has been Sugata Mitra's 'Hole-in-the-Wall'. In part 1, we summarised the arguments put forward by Sugata

Mitra based on his 'Hole in the Wall' experiments with children in the rural slums of India. Mitra points out that though many of these children had never seen a computer in their lives were able, when left alone with computers in kiosks, to teach themselves everything from 'character mapping' to advanced topics such as 'DNA replication', without adult assistance. Mitra suggested this would lead to 'unstoppable learning', through a 'worldwide cloud' where children would pool their knowledge and resources, in the absence of adult supervision, to create a world of self-promoted learning; in other words, Mitra describes a variation on Prensky's DIY approach to education, with a minimal presence of teachers who, in the autonomous digital world, often get in the way of learning.

Critics have questioned whether leaving computers in villages - and letting students get on with it - results in gains in subjects such as math and in the acquisition of other skills. According to Michael Trucano (12) no evidence of increases in these key skills has been found. Trucano writes from a sympathetic perspective to digital education - according to Wikipedia, his work is sponsored by the World Bank; he is the World Bank's Senior Education & Technology Policy Specialist and Global Lead for Innovation in Education, serving as the organization's spokesperson on issues of technology and education in middle- and low-income countries and emerging markets around the world.

At a practical level, Trucano provides policy advice, research and technical assistance to governments seeking to utilize new information and communication technologies (ICTs) in their education systems. Thus, whether Trucano comes down for or against the Hole-in-the-Wall, he can hardly be considered a neutral observer on the role of technology in education. The involvement of the World Bank in promoting digital innovation in global education confirms at least that claims for digital education are often bound up very much with economic and political issues and teachers should approach such claims with critical circumspection.

Some critics see the idea of promoting digital learning on a global level as potentially 'dumping hardware in schools and hope for magic to happen' (13). The long-term sustainability of the Mitra's DIY kiosk system has been questioned; for example, Arora (14) investigated the failure of two Hole-in-the-Wall projects in Himalayan communities; the researcher identified problems arising from unsupervised learning around a computer

(dominance by boys, competition, bullying, playing around etc)

Similarly, UK education researcher Donald Clark (15) accumulated evidence suggesting that the fate of a Hole-in-the-Wall site is often abuse and abandonment, unless it is inside a safe sanctuary, such as a school. Moreover, Clark found that the computers were often dominated by bigger boys, excluding girls and younger students, and mostly ended up being used for entertainment, not education.

Deep reading

The most important insights that research into digital education has to offer language teachers will have to do with more effective acquisition of language, in the traditional 'four skills' of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Recommendations such as those made by the prestigious teachers' organisation, TESOL International, that teachers 'should recognize the need for integrating technology in their teaching' (16), should be considered in the light of evidence for the efficacy of technology in achieving SLA.

One assumes that the strong suggestion made by TESOL (notice the modal verb 'should') is made on the assumption that we have firm evidence that multimedia deepens comprehension and strengthens learning. Nicholas Carr (17) in a fascinating study claims that this assumption, long accepted without much evidence, has been contradicted by research.

Carr refers to evidence that suggests that the division of attention demanded by multimedia strains our cognitive abilities, diminishing our learning and weakening our understanding. The Internet, argues Carr, presents information not in a carefully balanced way, but as a concentration-fragmenting mishmash. The Net is, by design, an interruption system, a machine geared for dividing attention (18). This capacity of the Net to distract us to prompt us to leap from link to link to connect with it, whenever we like, and wherever we are, whatever we are doing, is its charm. The beauty of digital devices, paradoxically, lies in their power to keep us skating on the surface and not get lost in texts as we did in traditional reading of books or articles.

Carr explores the concept of 'deep reading': the ability to know in depth a subject for ourselves, to construct within our own minds the 'rich and idiosyncratic set of

connections that give rise to a singular intelligence' (19). Carr quotes research that suggests reading in the real world leads to greater comprehension than reading on the Internet.

Carr is not a Luddite – he writes as someone who enthuses about the benefits and pleasures of the Internet, but questions whether software and hardware experts are also experts in education: the internet wasn't built by educators to optimize learning. Where can we turn to reconcile these conflicting views of IT in ELT?

A way forward: blended learning

Bill Gates may point the way forward when he says 'technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them the teacher is the most important' (20).

Prensky himself recommends that it is time to reassess what 'good and effective teaching' means in a digital age and how to combine what is important from the past with the tools of the future. Good and effective teaching, according to research reviewed by Borg, means that, among other qualities, teachers are both technically skilled and emotionally intelligent (21). Research conducted by the US Department of Education, involving over 1,000 case studies, suggests that students achieved better results where ICT was used - with the greatest improvement when technology was blended with traditional teaching (22).

All this points in two directions: the first is that we should be using modal verbs like 'should' less and using 'can' more. 'Can' can accommodate the wide variety of learning and teaching styles contained in the language teaching profession. It opens the way for the second direction in which our discussion has pointed us – we need to make the most of the virtues of traditional teaching and integrate them with the opportunities offered by digital learning. An approach which seems to lend itself to this integration of old and new is blended learning: 'a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through delivery of content and instruction via digital and online media with some element of student control over time, place, path or pace'. 'while still attending a 'bricks-and-mortar' school structure, face-to-face classroom methods are combined with computer-mediated activities' (Wikipedia – 'Blended Learning').

The fact that there are many definitions of 'blended learning' need not bother us; the multiplicity of views as to what blended learning is, may be good news, if we stick with 'can' rather than 'should'; the vagueness surrounding blended learning will give us greater flexibility in our attempt to accommodate more students and more teachers: if blended learning is, in essence a combination, in varying degrees, of online and face-to-face learning, paper and electronic material, real-world and virtual world experience, then already we have the framework for marrying the old with the new.

Different learners can choose the appropriate proportions according to personal learning style; the same applies to the teacher, who can blend digital tools and classroom instruction according to the resources available in her institution and her own professional skills as a teacher.

The teacher's voice

21st century teachers are engaged in a perpetual race to keep up, not only with digitally-innovating colleagues, but with their own digital-native students. Technology is, by definition, attractive insofar as it is the 'latest', the most 'up-to-date'. Teachers, on the whole, genuinely want to be competent in the most recent approaches, methods and techniques, and today much of these revolve around the integration of digital technology into teaching. At the same time, teachers bemoan the lack of support and training in their efforts to be 'up-to-date'.

In the best of times, schools in the public sector were unable to invest in the latest technology, even if that investment were a one-off; in these days of cuts and systemic underfunding, and with the market constantly coming up with new ideas and 'up-dates' to old ones, the public sector and probably the private sector, too, are fighting a losing battle to keep up-to-date.

Apart from falling behind in the hardware and software stakes, all schools, especially state-run, suffer from a teacher training deficit: even if teachers are fortunate enough to be offered a short training course or the occasional workshop by peers or visiting trainers, there are few resources and little political will to sustain training on a regular basis to meet the challenge of perpetual digital innovation.

Cash-strapped and time-pressed teachers are forced back on their own resources, if they wish to continue their training in technology – and to keep up with their

digital-native students.

There are two sides to digital pedagogy: the teachers' competence is one half of the digital deal; the other half is the students' willingness to co-operate - their readiness to be motivated by our digital bag of tricks. For most of our students, the computer means the internet, social media and entertainment. Therefore, when students are asked to use the same media not for purposes of, but in connection with learning and obligations such as homework they may at first be pleasantly surprised and motivated; however, when the novelty wears off they may begin to find it irritating that the adult world is invading 'their space'. This is particularly a danger when school computers are out-of-date and thus offend the students' sense of 'new is good' and the 'latest is the best'. Students often own an iPad or the latest smartphone, whereas the school I.T. lab may have equipment which is 10 or more years old. The digital revolution is in a constant state of renewal: this is part of its appeal. Teachers, too, need to be in a constant state of renewal, but this is usually not possible due to economic and political factors. Where can one turn?

The Greek oracle

Teachers are under pressure – from educational authorities, international organisations and the markets – to adopt digital technology in their teaching. Influential and powerful media figures, such as Rupert Murdoch, have joined the chorus of voices urging us to jump onto the digital bandwagon:

'Like many of you...I'm a digital immigrant...my two young daughters, on the other hand, will be digital natives. They'll never know a world without ubiquitous broadband internet access...we may never become true digital natives, but we can and must begin to assimilate to their culture and way of thinking' (23).

Murdoch's argument is important because he is important; he may not be a scholar and he may not present the results of empirical research, but he is one of the masters of the media world; he wields considerable power: what he thinks and does today may well affect the way we live tomorrow. The point he is making, like Prensky, the father of the 'digital native' concept, seems to be that we adults need to go with the youthful digital flow or get left behind – or out. We can call this the 'jumping on the bandwagon'

argument. If something is popular (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat...) it must be OK, or at least we must be part of it; if you can't beat them, join 'em!

On the surface, this approach, of adjusting to the will of the majority, sounds like common-sense: it is open-minded and democratic. But long ago, in Ancient Greece, the cradle of an albeit imperfect democracy, these words were written at the entrance to the oracle at Delphi: 'Pay no attention to the opinion of the multitude'.

I would modify this motto, if I may beg to disagree with the wise oracle, to read: 'be critical of the opinion of the multitude' – and be prepared to go against the grain, after having weighed up the evidence for a particular set of educational principles or practice. Socrates, one of the first great educators in history, said 'the unexamined life is not worth living'. I take this to mean a good teacher and a good citizen is by definition one who questions received wisdom even if that wisdom is the opinion of the majority.

Socrates, also learned from the oracle that other famous Greek philosophical principle: 'know thyself'. Individual teachers in diverse contexts around the world will have their own strengths and weaknesses, their own culture and experience of teaching. Continued teacher development (TD) involves being aware of who we are as teachers, what we do well and what we do less well. A good teacher is, among other things, one who is constantly ready to learn – and however many years of experience he or she may have and however many generations of students he or she may have successfully got through important examinations or helped to acquire communicative skills in English, he or she will always be ready to learn: Socrates put this state of readiness to

learn in his famous statement:

I know one thing: I know nothing.

A good teacher, then, engages in continued teacher development, in a constant exercise in renewed self-awareness and critical evaluation of old and new principles and practices. It is sometimes said that computers will never replace teachers but that teachers who are skilled in education with computers will replace those who 'know nothing' about computers and therefore do not use them in teaching. By implication, this is another one of those 'should' statements: it is more likely that in the future teaching will have a place for teachers and learners who can teach with or without technology: the important thing is to motivate and inspire the learner to acquire English – this was possible before the arrival of computers and it will be possible if, one day, the lights suddenly go out and we can't connect our computers. Technological and traditional educational resources will co-exist, alone or together.

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In the third and final part of this trilogy of articles on the digital revolution, I will reflect on the impact of IT on a personal level.

How do you stay healthy and motivated for your busy teaching life?

by Christina Markoulaki

About me



Christina Markoulaki is an Athens University graduate and an EFL teacher in Maria Markaki Language School in Heraklion (Greece), where she was also born. She is fortunate enough to have been trusted with students of all ages and levels within her working years, their ages ranging from 5 to 50 years old. Using all types of modern technology along with traditional books to create new learning experiences is what fascinates her. In her free time, she relishes cycling, gym sessions and book reading.

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When I was assigned this topic, as a conscientious student who always does some research before doing her homework (whose [benefits](#) need to be reminded from time to time so as for motivation to be sustained!), I browsed the Net about how health can affect a teacher's work with the intention of getting a more comprehensive picture of the situation. Surprisingly enough, this is what I immediately stumbled on:

The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) in the UK Survey

- 40% of teachers reported having visited their doctor with a stress-related problem in the previous year.
- 20% of teachers considered they drank too much
- 15% believed they were alcoholics.
- 25% suffered from serious stress related health problems including hypertension, insomnia, depression

and gastrointestinal disorders.

Taken from: <http://www.school-teacher-student-motivation-resources-courses.com/howdoesstressaffectthehealth.html>

Upon reading this, it hit me: whether these statistics are true or not, teachers need to consciously do everything in their power so as not to find themselves in a similar plight. How is the effective transmission of knowledge possible in the context of all the aforementioned problems? Especially when sobriety is lacking!

This funny thought led me, in turn, to the following realization: When embarking on a teaching profession, one must be **prepared** to face all difficulties and demands by discovering ways to renew their energy reserves. This is what I strive to do at the beginning or end of each tiring weekday.



First of all, **enriching my educational knowledge** by reading various [teachers' blogs](#) and subsequently updating my blog always makes me feel eager to go into class and put these novel ideas into practice. Seminars, conferences and webinars constitute another great source of inspiration to all educators. A case in point is all [TESOL Greece initiative and conventions](#), whose participants can gain access to linguistic information, various classroom practices and riveting ideas.

What is more, pursuing an interest plays a crucial role in personal development. For example, whenever I read a good book of Greek or English literature, I invariably end up having more ideas about what material to employ in my next lessons. One of the English books I read is [Irvin Yalom's "When Nietzsche Wept"](#), which subsequently led me to reflect on personal happiness and urge my adult learners to do the same in [a related blog post](#) I prepared for them. Strangely enough, the more I read and learn, the more I yearn to share this knowledge with others.

One final activity that relaxes and totally invigorates me is cycling. The feel of the gentle touch of air on my face while cycling in the countryside gives me a unique sense of freedom, also motivating me to work equally hard the following day. This very sport has, quite unexpectedly, provided me with loads of classroom material, since I have invariably employed photos of mountainous scenery and cycling equipment as prompts in speaking lessons. To me, every little thing in life, no matter how insignificant it may seem, can constitute EFL material with the proper manipulation.

To round off what has been said, here are several questions aiming at encouraging self-assessment and improvement:

How often do you spend time expanding your teaching knowledge?

What interest of yours rejuvenates you the most, urging you to resume work?

Have you ever integrated any material derived from your hobbies into your teaching?

I have saved these two photos for the end; above you can admire the view I got to see (Heraklion can be distinguished in the distance) after cycling up a steep hill,

sometimes through mud, craggy paths or small streams, like in the photo below.



In the final analysis, this is what teaching is to me: physically and mentally exhausting and demanding at times, but totally rewarding in the end. Let us all do whatever we can to keep ourselves healthy and motivated so as to enjoy the breathtaking view at the end of the route, side by side with our students.

Christina's article is a reprint of her original post found at her iTDI blog. To see the post and read all Christina's articles, [click here](#).



DATES TO REMEMBER



17/09/16

ETAS Professional Development Day with the ETAS SIGs, Kantonsschule Zug, Zug, Switzerland



16-18/09/2016

25th Annual International IATEFL Poland Conference, Szczecin, Poland



23-24/09/2016

SKA 2nd international ELT Conference, Kosice, Slovakia



25/09/16

TESOL MTH Welcome back event, Amphitheatre of Central Library, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki



1-2/10/2016

IATEFL ESPSIG conference, IST College, 72 Pireos Street, Moschato, Athens



7-9/10/2016

26th International IATEFL-Hungary 3D Conference, *Dimensions, Diversity, and Directions in ELT*, University of Kaposvar, Hungary



8/10/2016

IATEFL PronSIG event: 'Different voices' with John Wells and Adrian Underhill, Falmer Campus, University of Brighton, Brighton, UK



26-28/10/2016

2016 International Symposium on Verbs, Clauses and Constructions, University of La Rioja, Spain



28-29/10/2016

IATEFL TEASIG event with ETAS, World Cycling Centre, Aigle, Switzerland



4-6/11/2016

The 29th IATEFL BESIG Annual Conference, Holiday Inn, Central Munich, Germany



18-20/11/2016

TESOL France's 35th Annual International Colloquium: *Reaching new heights in ELT*, Paris, France



1-2/12/2016

The Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture, Voices of the Future: The Sound of Many Languages and Nations in Partnership, University of Washington Rome Center, Italy



11/12/2016

TESOL MTH Christmas event



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