

The
Teacher Trainer

A PRACTICAL JOURNAL FOR THOSE WHO TRAIN, MENTOR AND EDUCATE TESOL TEACHERS

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People who Train People, Observation and Feedback,
Article Watch and Publications Received.

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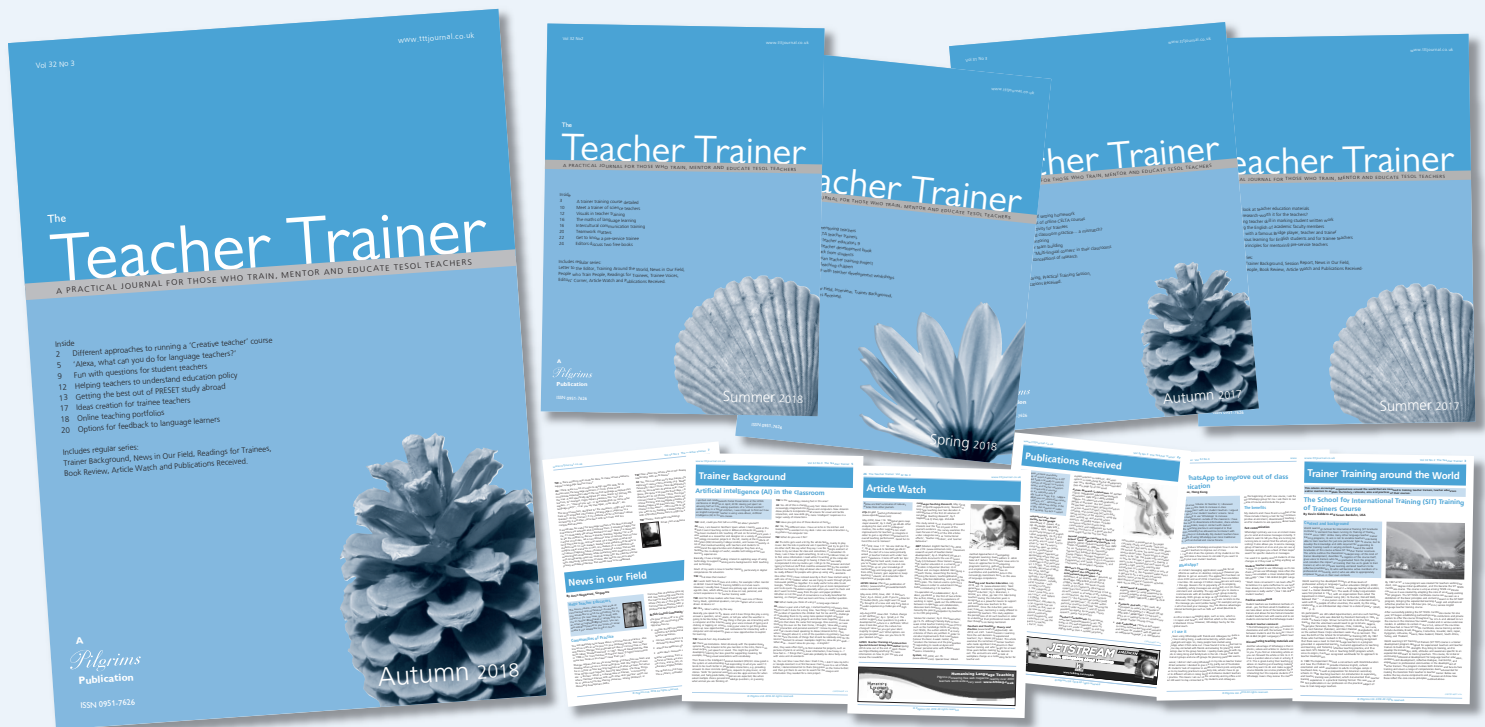
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The Teacher Trainer

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Letter to the Editor

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Observation and Feedback

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Article Watch**Publications Received**

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Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of our thirty third volume.

In this editorial I would like to consider the geographical spread represented in our pages. Over the last three years, we have published contributions from authors based in the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Macedonia, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Palestine, Singapore, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, The USA, The UK, Turkey, Vietnam, and Wales.

Of course, if you are based in one of these countries, you are still most welcome to submit an article. And if you come from a different country from the ones above, you still need to send in something interesting and relevant to teacher trainers, teacher educators and teacher mentors! But it would be fun to add to our list of places where authors are based.

As a reminder, our established columns are: Author's corner, Book review, Classroom practice, Conference reports, Current research, E-Matters, Feeder fields, Games for TT, Have you read...? In-service training and development, Interviews, Language matters, Literature matters, Meet a colleague, Observation and feedback, People who train people, Training round the world, Practical training session, Pre-service training, Process options, Q and A, Readings for trainees, Mentoring, Teacher selection and evaluation, The spoof page, Trainee voices, Trainer background, Trainer materials, Trainer mistakes, and Trainer training.

We also take articles that do not fall neatly under the headings above so don't be put off if your idea doesn't fit there! For more details on how to send draft articles in, please see page 11 of this issue. And if you have any questions at all, please do get in touch. Unlike journals who may be proud of their rejection rate, we aim to try to get as many people into print as possible!

This issue is available, as usual, in this print edition and also by subscribing online at: www.tttjournal.co.uk. Also online is a free selection of back articles and some extras in the TTTJ Plus section!

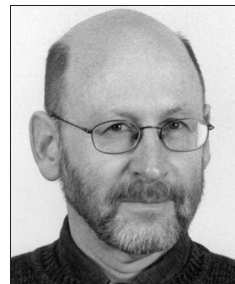
I hope you enjoy reading Volume 33 Number 1!

All good wishes

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The Editor



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About "The Teacher Trainer"

The Teacher Trainer is a practical journal for those involved in modern language, especially TESOL, teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in the staff room, or a Director of studies with an office of your own, whether you are a mentor or a course tutor on an exam course, an inspector going out to schools or a teacher educator at a university, this journal is for you. Our aim is to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put fellow professionals in touch with each other and to give all those involved in training, mentoring and educating teachers a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate, as well as building up a pool of experience within our own field.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. articles, letters, comments, quotations, interviews, cartoons, spoofs. If the idea is good and useful to trainers, we'll print it no matter what voice you choose to express it in.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Tessa,

I would like to address colleagues who teach practical, down-to-earth methodology, to would-be teachers of language, in university departments around the world: I'd like to ask you all, 'How are you seen and valued by your academic colleagues as you forge and share the indispensable tools that new teachers need to survive in their classrooms, as you teach them the HOW and IN WHAT SPIRIT of teaching?'

I am prompted to do this by a paragraph from a letter I received from a colleague who works in a continental European university. She writes:

"As far as work is concerned, I seem to be in some kind of professional midlife crisis. I was never respected at the Uni. I'm not "academic" enough, I guess. But recently it has started to bother me that I am so poorly valued at the Department. Students like me, of course, but colleagues don't think much of my work. I don't have a Ph. D which is all that matters here at the Uni..."

I have been to this colleague's workshops and have found them increasingly excellent over the years. I have run Teacher Training groups with her and found her work creative, solid and flexible. We have done mutual supervision and so I have some idea of the inner life that animates her work with groups. Against this background, I find her paragraph, quoted above, both idiotically sad, and maximally troubling.

In your experience, is this case an isolated one or are there many more cases in Universities round the world where practical methodology instructors in TEFL courses or modules are seen as poor relations by their more academic peers?

Is there a general intellectual contempt for people who teach the practical applications of any subject being taught? For example, are surgeons and consultants contemptuous of those who train others in new operational procedures? Or are they mighty proud of learning something that will save umpteen lives in the future?

If you have views on this apparent contempt for practicality in University pre-service training of language teachers, please share your thoughts via the pages of THE TEACHER TRAINER. For safety's sake you may want to use a nom de plume.

Warmly yours,

Mario Rinvoluceri, (Pilgrims Associate)

Meeting the needs of Mexico's bi-lingual post-secondary teachers with a CLIL-based teacher training program

By David Siefker, Cynthia Eden, and Samantha Burns, Canada

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to describe and highlight key features of a unique teacher training program (Teaching English for Academic Purposes-TEAP) which was designed to meet the specific needs of post-secondary Mexican educators who work or will work within a bilingual teaching model. Below we outline how the TEAP program differs from traditional EAP/ESL teacher training programs in that it focuses on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), collaboration amongst content and language teachers, and lifelong learning practices. TEAP is unique in that it is one of the few CLIL-based teacher trainer programs in Canada for post-secondary instructors.

The Mexican Cohort

Mexico, the situation and upcoming changes

The Teaching English for Academic Purposes (TEAP) Teacher Training Program was developed in response to a request to support post-secondary educators in Mexico as they transition to a bilingual teaching model (Spanish and English) in polytechnic and technical universities throughout Mexico. The Mexican Ministry of Education has planned for and begun to implement this fundamental shift toward post-secondary bilingual education referred to as the BIS (Bilingual, International and Sustainable) model. The eventual goal of the BIS model is to provide post-secondary content classes solely in English with additional language support offered via English language classes. Mexico has plans to greatly expand the number of institutions implementing the BIS model over the next few years.

During the first semester of the BIS model, students receive 535 hours of English training. From the second semester through to the end of their studies, the number of content courses delivered in English gradually increases, while the number of hours devoted to English language support classes is reduced. For example, students receive 135 hours of English support in semester 2 and only 75 hours by the fourth semester.

BIS Model's links to CLIL

The BIS Model most closely aligns with principles behind the Content Language and Integrated Learning (CLIL) model for bilingual teaching. CLIL establishes a platform where language becomes a vehicle for authentic use of newly-learned language while manipulating content in a relevant and meaningful way (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008; Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010). CLIL creates space for the development of language competency and "cognitive flexibility" (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010). This is achieved through a focus on Content, Cognition, Culture and Communication (the 4 C's) in class, and where language classes support the work done in the content classes (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008).

"CLIL establishes a platform where language becomes a vehicle for authentic use of newly-learned language while manipulating content in a relevant and meaningful way."

The 4C's of CLIL

As mentioned above, the 4C's of CLIL are Content, Cognition, Culture, and Communication. Content refers to the subject matter and course material. Cognition refers to the promotion of cognitive or thinking skills in class. Culture includes learning about others as well as the self and is sometimes carried out through observation and reflection type activities. Communication refers to language skills (Bentley, 2010). A CLIL lesson or course would include all the elements of CLIL: Content, Cognition, Culture, and Communication.

TEAP Participants

The TEAP course was offered in the summers of 2016 and 2017. The participants from both cohorts were educators who teach at bilingual post-secondary institutions and who have varied teaching backgrounds: some are English language teachers, others are content-specific teachers (e.g. Medicine, Engineering, and Animation), while others teach both English language and content-specific courses. Additionally, some have little teaching experience while others are seasoned educators; some have a high level of English proficiency and some have lower proficiency.

TEAP Course

The TEAP Course is 100 hours consisting of fifty two-hour modules. The modules included typical EAP/ESL teacher training curriculum contents such as approaches and methods to language learning and teaching, skill-based approaches and methods, error correction, feedback, and assessment. However, all of these components were presented within the CLIL framework. Participants gained an understanding of CLIL through explicit explanation followed by interactive activities, discussion, exploration, discovery, and application. This was primarily assessed through a microteaching and a lesson planning assignment, and a final test.

In addition to these assignments, the participants were also responsible for completing a 20-hour practicum. The first 10 hours of the practicum were done as observations in an EAP classroom (done on site at the University of Guelph in the English Language Program (EAP)) and assessed with an observation report. The remaining 10 hours of the practicum was completed upon return to Mexico. It consisted of a self-assessment task, a peer observation and a video-recorded lesson that was sent back to the University of Guelph in order to receive feedback from TEAP instructors.

Program Goals

To gain clarity around the learning needs of the Mexican educators and to better understand their institutional and administrative needs, the development team from the University of Guelph did an in-country needs analysis. From this needs analysis, the team felt it would be beneficial to innovate and divert from a traditional approach to teacher training in order to foster more authentic content/language integration in curriculum while increasing potential for interdisciplinary collaboration. The team also wanted to choose an approach that would support CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) development.

"TEAP Content teachers faced a lack of resources and materials"

continued >>>

Developing TEAP using CLIL

A challenge we faced while developing this CLIL based teacher training program was that the CLIL model is typically used at the secondary level with students who have studied the L2 from elementary school (Lightbown, 2014). Applying the model to a post-secondary teaching level where some students start with almost no English ability and where the content course topics were more field specific, required some flexibility and adaptation. Thus, TEAP Content teachers faced a lack of resources and materials, so a goal of the course was to provide opportunities for participants to create and share materials and resources.

Implementing TEAP: Noticing Lack of Awareness of CLIL

While the BIS model was designed with CLIL principles, a majority of participants lacked awareness of or encountered obstacles implementing the principles.

This observation was supported through participant feedback offered at the end of the TEAP course. One participant noted, "My teaching skills improved by adding more reflection and cognitive activities in the classroom as opposed to only keeping activities that just improve communication skills." Another mentioned, "My teaching skills improved in the planning of my classes to include content and language in the same class, to elicit critical thinking and to include meaningful activities."

The 4C's of CLIL

In his work in CLIL, Banegas (2012) points out that teaching language is not seen as an integral agent for learning and is of minimal consequence in their content-specific courses. He goes on to say that even if content teachers addressed language, they tended to deal with language problems independently and exclusively through translation. We also noticed the same tendencies with our *content teachers* when they used translation as a way to teach vocabulary in their lesson planning and preparation. It was also apparent that many content educators favoured Cognition and Content as their primary teaching maxims because of their familiarity and ease with the use of critical thought and content acquisition in their teaching practice.

On the other hand, *language educators* felt most comfortable with aspects of Communication and Culture and shied away from Cognition and Content. Since course material and resource selection are often mandated, language educators often viewed cognition and content as incidental outcomes rather than planned outcomes. Consequently, these factors were often overlooked in preparation, teaching and assessment practices.

Reinforcing CLIL Best Practices

Establishing an understanding of the principles and best practices of CLIL for TEAP participants was imperative. Being able to experiment with CLIL principles in a low-risk environment proved to be the primary catalyst for participants to reflect on existing teaching mindsets and practices. Class discussion as well as small group and pair work in almost each of the modules afforded the time and space to allow for this understanding, experimentation and materials development to grow.

Thus, through the process of creating a CLIL lesson plan, receiving TEAP instructor lesson plan/micro-teaching feedback and executing a micro-teaching of the lesson plan with their cohort, participants experienced the 'real world' applications and benefits of the evidence-based CLIL teaching and learning approach.

"It was noticed that teaching principles used in Communicative Language Teaching also benefitted content educators."

Additionally, it was noticed that teaching principles used in Communicative Language Teaching also benefitted content educators. Topics like course objectives, lesson planning, task-based learning, feedback and error correction were included in the TEAP course content and adapted for content teachers to be used in conjunction with their predominant didactic teaching style. For many content educators in our program and elsewhere, only the ability to speak English was considered essential for CLIL teaching success (Banegas, 2012) and teaching techniques were not considered important. One of the participants wrote, "Using English teaching techniques in certain aspects of content teaching will help me deliver the same content. Helping students with English will certainly help in our BIS model".

Emergent Themes: Collaboration and Life Long Learning

Encouraging Collaboration in CLIL

Many educators in CLIL teaching situations tend to view themselves as either content teachers or language teachers, and view team teaching negatively (Banegas, 2012). However, a collaborative approach where both content and language educators expand their respective responsibilities to include aspects of their counterpart's objectives is considered essential to a CLIL approach (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008). Snow, Met and Genesee (1989) also found that when both educators partake in the assessment of content and language, this provides the most effective teaching environment for immersion students. Thus, collaboration ensures students receive the most effective instruction and feedback related to language and content from all of their teachers.

"When both educators partake in the assessment of content and language, this provides the most effective teaching environment for immersion students."

Creating a Positive Space for Collaboration

To demonstrate and reinforce the importance of collaboration, tasks were built into TEAP modules which encouraged content and language educators to work together. This provided many opportunities for deeper discussions about role perceptions and responsibilities and allowed for expression of frustrations. These issues were discussed within the context of CLIL best practices, and our hope was that this space for collaboration in TEAP would be transferred to educators' workplaces.

One area that fostered collaboration was microteaching which gave an opportunity for participants, who may not have had previous occasion to collaborate, to work together closely. It also provided space for participants to observe their peers' team teach and participate in a feedback discussion about what worked well and offer suggestions for improvement. TEAP participants were able to see firsthand a variety of teaching techniques and judge their effectiveness. Participants mentioned that the microteaching feedback sessions were one of the most valuable and enjoyable aspects of the program, and in the course feedback, this was the most commented on part of the program.

For example, one participant commented, "The microteaching assignments are very useful to improve my practice, because let me know how I can teach a content topic including languages skills. Another participant stated, "I was already familiar with some of the concepts that were mentioned in the books/course, but observing microteaching gave me a bunch of new ideas and made me reflect on my own way of doing things."

In addition to microteaching, the TEAP course content included practical ideas to assist educators with collaboration in a CLIL classroom as outlined in Mehisto, Marsh & Frigols (2008). Examples include content and language educators working together to create class and course objectives that focus on content, culture, cognition and language for both content and language classes. Another important component of content was the creation and implementation of assessments that have both language and knowledge elements as well as connections to critical thinking. This was also reinforced with a practicum task in which participants were to observe a peer and share feedback in the hope of initiating a sustainable collaborative atmosphere.

One issue that was mitigated through collaboration was the relatively low English language proficiency (B2) of some of the participants when considering the language demands of teaching in a CLIL classroom. A collaborative approach with language educators and content educators provided space for language support for content educators who may have needed it.

"It is important to acknowledge the implementation obstacles that our participants had or would have in their working environments around new teaching ideas in a CLIL teaching situation."

Creating Opportunities to Support Long Term Change

It is important to acknowledge the implementation obstacles that our participants had or would have in their working environments around new teaching ideas in a CLIL teaching situation. Obstacles include grasping the concepts behind CLIL; the increased workload especially for post-secondary instructors, and, at times, school administrators not understanding or supporting the principles behind CLIL (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008).

Another goal of TEAP was to provide support and encouragement for participants to make effective and transformative changes in their teaching after returning to Mexico in order to overcome these obstacles. Consequently, modules were developed to promote lifelong learning focusing on topics like Action Research, Classroom Observations, and Critical Incident Journaling. Participants were introduced to these topics as a potential means to investigate and reflect on what was occurring in their classrooms. For example, one participant commented, "The module on Teacher Development was my favorite, since it gave me a great insight on the importance of being up to date. It really motivated me to work on Language Teaching Research which deals with the Mexican context, and more specifically with the context of Technological Universities, since this type of research is greatly needed." Another participant stated, "For me, being in touch with other teachers and observing their everyday practice is very valuable. This helped me to reflect on my own teaching practices. Another very valuable component of the TEAP program is all the content related to lesson planning, critical thinking, reading strategies and Professional Development."

Another key component of supporting long term change of the application of CLIL best practices was the practicum and the practicum tasks. Participants were asked to complete a video-recorded lesson which would receive feedback. To raise awareness when applying CLIL principles, peer and self-assessment tasks were designed in hopes that educators might continue with this habit.

Conclusion

Devising an EAP teacher training course to focus on CLIL, collaboration and supporting long term change required a considerable amount of research and reflection to meet our Mexican cohort's needs. This also resulted in a true appreciation of the value of CLIL principles to bilingual education. Most of all, after running the program, we all were deeply impressed by the hard work and dedication of the Mexican educators that were in our program.

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Use sticky-notes and make the content stick

By Lucas Kohnke, Hong Kong

Introduction

There are a number of online tools we can use to make the language or teacher training classroom a place for excitement and learning. As an enthusiastic teacher and teacher trainer myself, I try to incorporate a variety of technology tools in my classes and always seek new ways to engage participants in collaborative learning. I came across virtual 'sticky-notes' a while back and was instantly attracted to their simplicity and usefulness in engaging participants. Sticky-note apps enable teachers to create a virtual "corkboard" to which we can add individual or collaborative sticky "post-it" notes. There are two main pedagogical benefits to incorporating virtual sticky notes over traditional paper ones. First, it is possible to access and share them online outside of class. Second, the apps allow users to upload images, audio, and video to the notes. If you are like me and enjoy easy to use and engaging online tools, you will enjoy working with sticky notes.

There are several sticky-note apps available, but my favorites include: *Lino* (<http://en.linoit.com/>) and *Padlet* (<https://padlet.com/>), both of which are free and available on the web, iOS, and Android systems by accessing the URL and/or downloading their free apps. As a group leader, you only need to create an account and then create a sticky note wall (Lino) or a blank wall (Padlet) and share the URL with your class. As long as the participants and the teacher or trainer have access to the internet you can use a sticky-note wall by accessing the same URL and working on it at the same time. If you would like to display everyone's contribution to the class, you would need a computer and data projector, or you can ask everyone to open the wall on their smartphones, iPads, etc.

Below, I will introduce three stress-free strategies for successfully incorporating sticky notes from the first day of class and using them until the end of the semester.

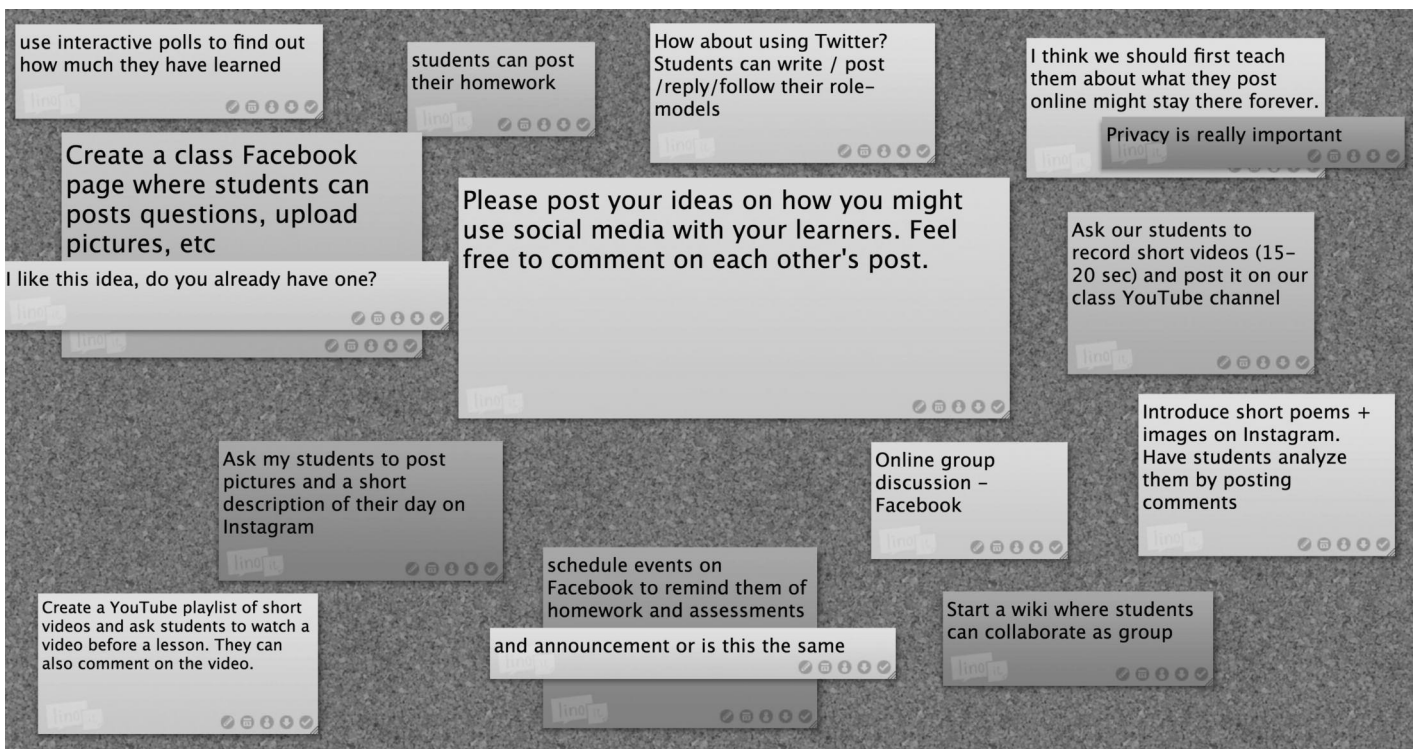
Post-it and reach your Goals

I often ask my language students or student teachers to identify their individual goals or objectives in the first class of the semester. So, before the first class, I create a sticky-note wall. Then, in the first class, together we brainstorm a few possible learning goals (I try to link them to the course aims). After everyone has identified a few goals, I ask them to post their learning goals on the sticky-note wall. Throughout the course, I encourage students to go back and revisit their goal(s) to keep them motivated. They can even tick off goals as they achieve them. At the end of the semester (or course), we revisit the sticky-note wall again and participants reflect (perhaps on another sticky-note) how well they have achieved their goals.

Fun with Feedback

As I'm correcting my students' writing (homework, assignments, assessments), I like to create a list of common mistakes, errors or issues for discussion arising from the written work. Instead of highlighting the mistakes or errors in class or giving my opinion on an issue, I like to add them to a virtual sticky-note wall, with one mistake or issue on each sticky-note. So, in class, when I provide or elicit feedback, I have various options. I review the sticky wall with participants and they can either individually or collaboratively work out the corrections or comments. Sometimes, I ask students to either edit the original sticky-note directly or add an additional sticky note with the mistake corrected or with an opinion stated. Before assigning their next writing activity, I ask students to review the sticky note wall and learn from each other's mistakes or ideas.

"If your situation is like mine, your language students and student teachers often rush from one class to the next and have limited time to stay after class to ask questions."



Back channeling

If your situation is like mine, your language students and student teachers often rush from one class to the next and have limited time to stay after class to ask questions. I have found sticky-notes to work especially well as a back-channeling device. Create a sticky-note wall (I recommend you create one wall for each week or for each unit) and ask students to post any questions they have about the subject matter. This activity can double as homework practice and preparation for the next class. As a teacher or teacher trainer, you have two options for answering their questions. Reply directly on the sticky-note wall itself, or review questions in the next class and answer them with the whole class. As it can be very time-consuming to answer every question on the wall I suggest you focus on the major ones. Another alternative is that you ask participants to answer each other's questions, and then in class you review them.

Why do sticky notes work?

Sticky-notes combine real learning goals with the excitement of using a simple, free and colorful technology in and outside of the classroom. A virtual "corkboard" can simultaneously motivate students while instilling confidence as they gain a sense of accomplishment (achieving identified learning goals) because they are able to tick off goals as the semester progresses, notice that other participants make similar mistakes or raise similar issues, and to ask follow-up questions in a non-threatening way.

As for us, it can save us time in giving feedback and getting a sense for how well our participants have learned the target content and let us know what and what not to revise.

Conclusion

You can incorporate sticky note tools for teaching and learning in many ways, but keep in mind that no technology tool is perfect. However, with sticky-notes, it is possible to adapt the three activities discussed above for children, adults, language learners or teachers in training. I encourage you to explore sticky notes with your students. I hope you will also be instantly attracted to the endless possibilities they offer to engage learners.

The Author



Lucas Kohnke is a Teaching Fellow at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and subject leader of ESP courses and the student mentoring scheme. His research includes student mentoring, professional development using Information Communication Technology, and English for academic purposes course design. Email: lucas.kohnke@polyu.edu.hk

The benefits of peer assessment in pre-service teacher training

By Stephanie Garrone-Shufran, USA

Introduction

I'm an assistant professor in the School of Education and Social Policy at Merrimack College, Massachusetts, USA. I teach mostly graduate courses, for teachers seeking a license to teach ESL in public schools in Massachusetts. The course I discuss below, 'Teaching Content to English Learners', is required for licensure in teaching ESL.

As much as possible in my courses, I ask student teachers to apply knowledge gained from their reading and from brief lectures to the evaluation and creation of teaching practice and materials. In the United States of America, much is expected of novice teachers. I feel that allowing them to work as much as possible as if they were *already* teaching may provide for a smoother transition from being a student to being a teacher. I also believe that teachers should collaborate and engage in collegial discussion of practice more often than is common here. I try to instill in my student teachers a spirit of collaboration and ask them to work closely with their classmates, whom I call their colleagues, to better the teaching practice of all.

Trying out peer assessment

I recently taught a very small class – only seven aspiring TESOL teachers – and decided to try out the use of a specific type of peer assessment. After participating in the implementation of a listening and speaking, reading, or writing strategy led by a peer, colleagues offered the presenter, in a whole-group setting, feedback using a specific protocol. (http://cilttd.org/tools/Assessment/Protocol_PeerReview.pdf).

All teacher candidates had to share at least two pieces of 'warm' feedback (supportive comments) and two of 'cool' feedback (questions or constructive critiques).

I chose this strategy for feedback delivery because I wanted to increase interaction in the class. However, using the strategy also provided me with insight into the teacher candidates' thinking and their application of course material in the real context of lesson delivery.

During the feedback, the teacher candidates reminded their colleagues to apply principles of comprehensible input, suggested methods for increasing language student interaction and engagement, and encouraged their peers to be specific in their assessment of content and language learning.

On reflection

In later reflection assignments, the teacher candidates reported that they did incorporate this feedback when they implemented their strategies in classrooms. For example, one teacher added realia, as suggested, to reinforce concepts in her reading lesson. Another asked language students to demonstrate part of her lesson, increasing kinesthetic learning and student engagement. Another revised her rubric to reflect more clearly the goals of the writing task she assigned to students.

Coming from the trainee teachers

I was able to remain completely silent during these peer assessment discussions. Each and every suggestion, question, or comment that I would have added was mentioned by a student teacher.

continued >>>

The expertise in the room was not being handed out by an instructor but was being generated by the novice teachers. Engaging in this task also created a supportive and friendly environment in which colleagues cheered one another on and learned from one another. Every teacher candidate wrote in their reflection that the peer assessment was a beneficial experience for them. While I have used other forms of peer assessment in the past, none have made the impact that this one did. Providing feedback in a structured, whole group manner might be challenging to manage in larger teacher education classes but, for teacher educators looking to build community and expertise among smaller groups of teacher candidates, it may be a promising practice to employ.

The Author



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Meet a Colleague

I bumped into Dr Christine Flächer in the self-catering kitchen of a hostel. We were both in Brighton, UK to attend the IATEFL 2018 conference there. We got chatting and I discovered that Christine is a mentor for both pre- and in-service teachers.

TW: Could you tell me where you work, Tina?

CF: I'm a language teacher at a grammar school in Bad Reichenhall in Bavaria, southeast Germany.

TW: Are the grammar schools selective?

CF: Grammar schools there still take in the more talented and motivated students of an age-group. Those students make up for about 40% of the pupils so individual students in the same learning group can have quite different levels of achievement.

TW: What's the system like there?

CF: In Bavaria, students start secondary school earlier than in Britain or other parts of Germany, in Year 5. By then, they have usually already studied English for two years in a rather playful way and at a very basic level. After lots of institutional changes over the past 15 years, we've finally returned to 13 years of schooling for all students who want to go on to university. This means that most grammar school students study English for eight to eleven years.

TW: Do you teach English?

CF: Yes, but grammar school teachers, like me, usually teach two or three subjects apart from English, I also teach Spanish and German as a Second Language. I'm head of the Spanish department and as part of this, I usually mentor a trainee teacher. I'm also the coordinator of German as a Second Language, and I'm a member of our school development team too. Our group within this team focusses on learner autonomy. I enjoy teaching, encouraging students to learn for themselves and improving learning.

TW: Could you tell us a bit about the teachers that you mentor?

CF: After finishing their university studies, usually in their mid-twenties, in the subjects they've chosen, as well as in teaching methodology, there's a kind of two-year post-graduate training for the new teachers. We could call them student or trainee teachers. You see, they still have to take courses in e.g., teaching methodology, psychology, school regulations etc. and have mentors who observe lessons and give feedback and advice, which makes them trainees. On the other hand, they teach up to 17 lessons a week, and are, apart from the first semester, mostly responsible for their classes' progress and in charge of marking. And they earn at least enough to live on. This would imply that they are real teachers.



TW: At what point do you meet them?

CF: The trainee teachers start and finish their training at schools where they have weekly courses in addition to their own teaching, and where they take their final exams in the last semester. The year in between they go to work at normal grammar schools to try out what they've learnt, get some routine and gain teaching experience. This is the time they spend at our school, where they are usually mentored by different teachers in each of their subjects.

TW: And what work do you do with them?

CF: The only things that a mentor like me is officially required to do is observe three lessons per semester and supervise how the young teacher sets and marks the students' written exams. Then mentors are also asked to evaluate the trainee teacher's work in and outside the classroom.

TW: How do you feel about that?

CF: I'm not keen on the role of evaluator. I try to stress the role of advisor, of an experienced colleague that the trainee can discuss ideas with or ask for help from. I also invite them to come and observe my lessons.

TW: And how do you go about your chosen role?

CF: When a trainee teacher starts teaching at our school, I try to make them feel welcome. I draw their attention to school-specific routines and procedures, especially within the department but also beyond, e.g. about media and materials, types of exams or language exchange programmes. I keep them informed especially during the school leaving exams and towards the end of term when there are so many extracurricular activities going on that it is easy to lose track.

As far as lesson planning, teaching and assessing is concerned, I advise the trainee and to a certain extent check their work. I give feedback on what they do and point out alternatives if something doesn't seem to be working. What I am *required* to do is check the exam papers they have written both before a test and after the marking. Beyond that, I try to get the trainee to try things out, to engage in reflection, to discuss and give reasons for what they do, why they do it and what the result has been.

TW: Were you trained to be a teacher mentor, did you volunteer or were you 'volunteered'?

CF: The first time I was 'volunteered', was only six months after finishing my own teacher training! It was an utter disaster because I didn't really know how to go about it. Also, the first teacher trainee I was supposed to mentor didn't accept the authority bestowed on me at all. Mind you, I don't blame her!

So, things could only get better after that experience, and they did.

TW: What helped you?

CF: What helped me most at the beginning were role models: heads of department and other experienced teachers who I could observe when they were mentoring, and who I could ask for advice.

TW: How has your mentoring developed?

CF: A few years later, I got the chance to work for the TEFL Department at Munich university. By teaching TEFL and accompanying my students during their work experiences at the schools, I was in the university tutor role in the supervisory triad. I learned a lot about being a teacher trainer. The work taught me to focus mostly on the major points of teacher-student interaction, particularly with inexperienced teachers, points like lesson structure. Besides that, I learnt how to give constructive and effective feedback. In addition, while working at the university, I also attended an excellent Trainer Development Course at Edinburgh University, which especially helped me reflect on my own role as a teacher trainer.

So now, after almost 20 years on the job, I really enjoy mentoring new teachers. It gives me the chance to observe lessons and pick up new ideas from the trainee teachers! I can learn a lot from them. At the same time, it obliges me to reflect on a lot of different features of my own teaching process so I can discuss, offer alternatives and justify my ideas. I find it extremely rewarding and it keeps me on my toes concerning my own teaching.

I have provided a photo of our school because I consider it more photogenic than I am!

TW: Thanks, Tina!

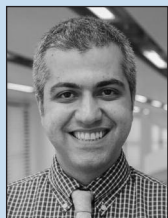
Email: c.flaecher@karlsgymnasium-bgl.de

News in Our Field

By Amin Neghavati, Singapore

Hello Teacher Educators,

This issue's News in Our Field column covers two areas of support: programmes and conferences. As always, if you would like to send me something for my column in the next issue, get in touch with me on Twitter @neghavati or simply drop me an email at neghavati@gmail.com. You can also add #TTTjournal to your posts on social media if you would like to get in touch.



Conferences

Conferences are great opportunities to expand your network and make connections with like-minded people who might even change your career path in the future. They are great experience, idea-sharing events and are usually the best places to find Communities of Practice (CoPs) in the fields you are most interested in. Here are a few you might be keen to explore:

IH Barcelona ELT Conference

In February this year, International House Barcelona hosted their annual ELT conference. This conference full of practical sessions has been providing support to teachers, trainers and ELT managers for a few years now. This year's conference happened with the support of IATEFL's Business English, Leadership and Management, and Learning Technologies Special Interest Groups. Scott Thornbury, Gail Ellis, Angi Malderez, Susan Barduhn, Andy Hockley, Ferran Velsco, Nik Peachey, Nicky Hockley, Paul Sweeney, Pete Sharma, Sophia Mavridi and George Pickering were among the speakers this year. Share your conference experience with us using the #TTTjournal hashtag if you were there in February.

53rd Annual International IATEFL Conference and Exhibition

ACC and Jurys Inn Hotel in Liverpool are the venues hosting the largest ELT event in Europe from 2 to 5 April 2019 with 13 Pre-Conference Events (PCEs) on 1 April. Online booking for the event closes on 19 March 2019 if you haven't registered yet. Paula Rebolledo, John Gray, Aleksandara Zaparucha and Lindsay Clandfield are the plenary speakers this year with a special interactive closing plenary with Katherine Bilsborough, Evan Frendo, Amol Padwad and Mercedes Viola on 5 April 2019 on future directions in ELT.

There are also some very interesting talks scheduled given by this year's scholarship winners. Neenaz Ichiporia who has won the Leadership and Management SIG scholarship, Adi Rajan who has won the Teacher Development SIG scholarship, and Alessandro Silva who has won the Trinity College London Teacher Training scholarship will be presenting on topics relevant to teacher training in the modern world at this year's IATEFL event.

The IATEFL Special Interest Groups have some very interesting, interactive and practical workshops scheduled for this year as well. The Leadership and Management SIG (LAMSIG) is delivering a one-day workshop on evaluation cycles in language schools. If you would like to see how you can employ the evaluation process in your team more effectively and then use the evaluation results in planning and implementation, don't miss this event.

The Teacher Development (TDSIG) and Global Issues (GISIG) Special Interest Groups are delivering a joint pre-conference event (PCE) in Liverpool on the hot topic of social justice in the ELT world.

Another interesting joint PCE this year is the event between the Business English (BESIG) and Teacher Training and Education (TTED) SIGs. Their event focuses on training business English teachers to prepare learners for modern workplaces.

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The main theme in this event will be the integration of soft skills in delivering Business English lessons. Ben Knight, Gordon Lewis and Ros Wright will be delivering sessions in this one-day event.

Giving feedback has always been a controversial topic for both teachers and teacher trainers. Not surprisingly, the world of technology has opened up lots of opportunities in this field. If you are interested to see how technology has influenced giving and receiving feedback, or how it is going to be used in the future (with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and bots, then make sure you go to the Learning Technologies (LTSIG) PCE this year. Russell Stannard, Joshua Underwood, Helen Allan and Angi Malderaz will help you to explore this world at the Racquet Club Hotel in Liverpool.

53rd TESOL International Convention and Expo

Atlanta, Georgia, USA is hosting the 53rd annual international TESOL Convention and Expo this year from 12 to 15 March 2019. With more than 900 sessions held over 4 days, this large ELT event in North America has a lot to offer.

TESOL International Association has defined a core set of principles for the exemplary teaching of English learners. The 6 Principles are guidelines drawn from decades of research in language pedagogy and language acquisition theory. This year, there is a training of trainers (TOT) event happening on 11 March 2019 to prepare trainers to offer professional development to teachers so they can successfully implement the 6 Principles in their classroom teaching. Make sure you register for this event if you are going to the Convention this year.

TESOL's popular ELT Leadership Management Certificate Program (LMCP) is also happening there. This is a 10-hour programme that you have to complete during the Convention. Neil Anderson, Christine Coombe and Fernando Fleurquin are among the trainers.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS!

Here are some recent additions to our subscription community of teacher trainers, teacher educators and teacher mentors:

British Council Afghanistan

Trinity College London

Javier Molina, Spain

Northwest University, USA

Olga Connolly, Russia

Rasha Halat, Lebanon

M. Beatriz M S Meneguetti, Brazil

British Council Schools, India

Sally Beetham Tilley, Canada

British Council Uzbekistan

Indra Linton, UK

Klaudia Bednarova, The Bridge, Slovakia

Dagmar Taylor, Germany

Training and Support Programmes

Professional Award for Teacher Educators

If you would like to move into teacher training for the first time or if you have been training teachers but have never had a formal qualification to prove it, this is something you must explore.

NILE are delivering a two-week programme with integrated assessment on teacher training. This programme is recognised by the British Council as a certification of teacher training competence. Successful participants in this programme receive certification in the Professional Award from the British Council, with a course participation certificate from NILE.

Details of the next run in July 2019 can be found on www.nile-elt.com/courses/course/681.

The IATEFL Teacher Development SIG

The TDSIG has always been very active in supporting teachers and trainers.

Here is a list of events you might be interested to share with your teachers:

DEVELOPOD

The IATEFL Teacher Development Special Interest Group are publishing a series of podcasts for teachers and teacher trainers. These podcasts focus on the importance of teacher development and dive deeper into areas where teachers might need more support. If you'd like to share these with your teachers, they can follow Developod on Podomatic at: www.podomatic.com/podcasts/developod

TD Live

These are community meet-ups which happen every couple of months. There is usually a teacher development related topic that is discussed on various social media channels. In January, they ran a Facebook Live chat on TD reading in practice. Check <https://tdsig.org/upcoming-in-tdsig/> or follow them on Twitter or Facebook to find out about their next event. These live events are a great example of how communities of practice can help their members to develop.

TD Web Carnival

In its 4th year, TD Web Carnival is now a popular online winter event which aims to draw on experiences and stories related to teacher development situations. Each winter, they host a themed month-long development session of blog posts, tweeted Q&As, and short video posts, which all culminate in a one-day online live event. In February 2019, they held their 4th event around the theme of 'developing development'. Watch their Web Carnival space <https://tdsig.org/webcarnival/> for updates or join the conversation on Twitter at #tdsigcarnival.

Don't forget to have a look at our website!

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The

Teacher Trainer

Sending in?

Would you like to send something in to *The Teacher Trainer*?

If you have an idea that is useful, relevant and interesting to teacher trainers, teacher educators and teacher mentors, why not write it up for us? If you are not familiar with our content or style, read an issue or three of the journal and also go on our web site to read examples of articles that have appeared in our pages.

Our readers

Our subscribers and readers are all over the world. Some have English as their first language. Many do not. They may be trainers of pre-service or in-service teachers and they work in many different settings. This is why a clear structure and clear language are very important in a first draft article. We are not overly academic. Even thoughtful pieces will keep the number of bibliographical references to under ten. And these pieces will contain a section on how the thoughts can be implemented or made to come alive to readers in their own settings

Timing

The Teacher Trainer comes out three times a year, but for contributors there are no deadlines as such so there is no need to worry about timing. Articles are printed once they are ready and after they have queued up for a while. There are no special issues, but there are specialised series running in most issues. Examples of these are "News in Our Field", "Practical Training Session", "Observation and Feedback" and 'Interview'.

First draft

So, if you would like to send us an article, please write in an accessible, non-academic style. Length should normally be 800-4,000 words. Send your first draft in double spaced with broad margins. Use headings and sub-headings throughout to make your text easier to follow. Please give a brief bio data and an accurate word count at the end. Make sure your name and contact details appear in both your article and your accompanying email in case the two get separated. Don't send your article to other publications at the same time as you are sending it to us as we will then not consider it.

Your article will be acknowledged by pro-forma email. It is normal for contributors to receive editorial comments later on so please do not take this as a sign of failure! Edits are often necessary to ensure your text is clear, a good length and makes sense to readers in very different settings round the world.

Turning down

We do sometimes turn articles down. This is usually for one of the following reasons:

- The article is for language students or language teachers not for our readership of teacher trainers, teacher educators and teacher mentors.
- The article is too similar to one already published or about to be published in the journal.
- The article (or a part of it) has already been published elsewhere.
- The article is too long for our few pages.
- The article is very academic in style.
- The article contains nothing new.

But wherever possible the editor will work with you to get your ideas in print. She is part-time so there may be delays when she is teaching or training and thus not working on articles for a few weeks.

Once accepted, we try to publish your article in about four issues, but if it is an awkward length, or we have space constraints, it may be in the queue longer.

Short articles!

When we are laying out a new issue of the *Teacher Trainer* journal, we often have a little space left over. We keep that for extra adverts that come in late. These little spaces are also perfect for short articles! So, if you have a really good idea that you want to share with fellow professionals, and it is very short (under 1,000 words), send it in! It may well help us with our layout. It may also mean that your work gets printed quicker than usual too!

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Refocusing my lens: A journey toward cultural responsiveness

By Cassandra O'Sullivan Sachar, USA

Introduction

Cultural responsiveness is far more than a buzz phrase. Many studies have shown that, for example, students of color respond well to teaching and classroom management techniques that aim to be sensitive to diversity. I've read countless articles and attended training sessions that discuss the importance of learning and practicing these techniques in the classroom, yet many fall short when it comes to detailing how to *actually* become more culturally competent.

As a white person who grew up in a nearly all white town, I rarely thought about my racial identity since I saw my skin color reflected back at me all over the media. Yes, that's white privilege. However, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that, as of fall 2014, the percentage of students enrolled in American public schools is less than fifty percent white. With many teachers in training coming from white backgrounds similar to mine, it is critical to equip them with strategies for working with multicultural students.

I would like to think I've learned much over the years and can now see through a far more culturally responsive lens, one that continues to adjust its focus for clarity. Through personal experience and study, I've learned to abide by several principles in and outside of the classroom when working with students whose backgrounds are different than mine. These insights have helped me become, I like to think, a more culturally responsive teacher and person.

Lessons learned

Here are some of the lessons I've learned that I want to pass on to teachers in training:

1 Don't force a student of color to detail his/her experience as a minority or as a spokesperson for that group.

It's important for students to have opportunities in class to discuss and write about social injustice and what can be done about it. There are innumerable occasions to integrate literature that explores this content into the curriculum in different disciplines. Over the years, many writers have passionately detailed their negative experiences to help others understand their plights on a more personal level. *The Electric Typewriter's* page "25 Great Articles and Essays about Race and Racism" (<https://tetw.org/Race>) is one of countless excellent resources that offer short but thought-provoking pieces.

The problem, however, comes into play when a student is put on the spot to speak for his/her group. When someone *chooses* to share an experience, it's one thing, but when a student is specifically called on for a "black perspective," for example, it can become uncomfortable and reduce him/her to a racial token. In her article *There Is a Fine Line Between Tokenism and Diversity*, Ella Wilks-Harper (2016) discusses how an individual can feel pressured to act as a representative for his/her race. If the goal is to force students to confront their racial identities for an educational purpose, that's fine, but then students of *all* races should be required to look through this lens, not *just* students of color, as that singles them out in a potentially uncomfortable manner.

"Claiming to be colorblind as an educator can be even more damaging."

On the other hand, claiming to be colorblind as an educator can be even more damaging. In his article *When You Say You 'Don't See Race,' You're Ignoring Racism, Not Helping Solve It*, Zach Stafford (2015) explains how suggesting one does not notice skin color is inherently racist in itself, as it discounts the struggles and oppression that generations of people have faced. *We should* all see color, and we can encourage discussion of it; we just don't want to reduce our students to nothing more than their color for the sake of their white counterparts.

To better understand the perspective of a student of color navigating her way through a white world, I interviewed my former student, Angela Montaña, an Afro Latina senior studying to become a high school English teacher. The daughter of Colombian immigrants, Angela describes herself as "first-generation everything." In the classes she takes for her major, she is usually the only person of color in the room.

"I hate being one of one," she told me. "I'm viewed as the spokesperson. Once, in my multi-cultural education class, a white boy asked, 'Why can't white people use the n-word?' and he looked right at me. I had to tell him, 'You are not black; you are not a person of color and cannot say it.' I'm proud of my roots and where I come from. But I don't have the same experiences as every person or color—we're not all raised the same way. Don't put me in a box and act like I represent everyone. What connects us [people of color] is the way society views us—that's what connects us."

"Don't put me in a box and act like I represent everyone."

2 Don't assume you know something about the student due to the color of his/her skin, but DO ask culturally sensitive questions and/or try to learn about other cultures.

This may seem glaringly obvious, but I've had to check my own assumptions on many occasions. Within the last few years, even, I caught myself sticking my foot in my mouth by asking an Asian American friend where he was from. His answer, 'New Jersey', wasn't quite what I had in mind. My ignorant, *true* question was, "What kind of Asian are you?"

Needless to say, his response really forced me to think. Both of us have American accents and are thus most likely from America; he could determine I was white by my appearance, but he didn't delve into my family tree to learn from what parts of Europe my ancestors hailed. It's not that I needed to refrain entirely from asking about his background, as we were getting to know each other and talking about our families; I just should have worded my question differently to be more sensitive. Rachel Kuo, in her article *4 Reasons Why Asking Asian People 'Where Are You Really From?' Is Racist* (2015), explains exactly why a question like mine is offensive, including how it marks Asian Americans as "perpetual foreigners" and alludes to fear of and distance from Asians. This is *not* how I want to treat my friends or students.

I encourage dialogue about race. When I taught high school, I often had classrooms where most of my students came from backgrounds different from my own. Fairly often, a student of a different race would ask me a question about, for example, being white, and it almost always started with, "No offense, but do white people...?"

"No offense, but do white people...?"

There wasn't one time when one of these questions was *actually* offensive, so I used these conversations as teachable moments to let my students know that they *could* talk to their peers of different races to learn more about them. As part of her study on cultural responsiveness training, Gül Tuncel (2017) required pre-service teachers to research cultures other than their own to encourage understanding. People in general should learn more about other cultures, but educators *in particular* should.

Angela knows all too well that some well-intentioned white educators have made assumptions based on the color of her skin. "They assume I'm on food stamps; they assume I don't live in a nice neighborhood. They haven't been exposed to our world, our way."

After explaining my personal experience of not knowing many individuals of color or from different cultures until adulthood, I asked her what advice she would give to white future teachers if they haven't had many interactions with people of color or from different cultures prior to teaching. Angela explained, "I feel like future educators are getting taught all these strategies for working with multicultural students. With all this knowledge, it shouldn't be about studying to ace the exams; they need to implement them and actually try to make a difference, and go into the classroom wanting to know about their students. Your story matters; where you come from *matters*. You're safe here."

3 Show that you value people with backgrounds different than yours.

By now, we all know the white male prevalence in the literary canon, and I'm not going to exclude an essay by the great John Steinbeck in my list of readings simply because of his white maleness. However, my reading list also includes essays by Zora Neale Hurston and Bharti Mukherjee, for example, authors who are African American and Indian American. While I made a concerted effort to include writers of color, I also chose these pieces as excellent examples of specific types of writing and fodder for class discussion. With so many options from which to choose, it was easy to accomplish this, and it shows that I value the work of these writers.

I asked Angela if she feels these strategies matter, and she emphatically agreed, detailing her negative experience taking a literature class where every single selection was written by white authors and was about white characters. "It didn't represent me. How hard is it to include writers of color when you have authors like Gabriel García Márquez and Alice Walker? And, I mean, Langston Hughes! We [students of color] want to read something we can relate to. Some teachers just don't give much effort to include writers of color. A white teacher can't be black, but she can feed selections that represent her students." The teacher may come from a mainstream American or British or Australian cultural background but can choose materials from many other cultures.

A white teacher can't be black, but she can feed selections that represent her students."

It is important to note, however, that writers of color should not *only* be included *because* of their diversity; in her essay *Transformative Pedagogy and Multiculturalism* (1993), social activist and writer bell hooks [sic] explains that this would be a form of tokenism. She encourages educators to approach works by multicultural authors with the "willingness to accord their work the same respect and consideration given other work" (p.93). She discourages "lump[ing] everything about race and difference together into one section" or ignoring issues of race dealt with by those authors in an effort to avoid "uncontrollable" classroom discussion (p.93).



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Likewise, when I sought brief television clips for a compare/contrast writing exercise for my students, I chose shows that featured diverse casts, specifically *Lost* and *The Walking Dead*. While I love shows like *Friends* and *Gilmore Girls*, as well, and I could stretch to find some educational merit in a two-minute clip from an episode, those shows are incredibly white and heterosexual and thus do not resemble the backgrounds of my students. By choosing a segment that shows a diverse cast, I'm not displaying my own racial identity while ignoring that of others.

My office is another place I try to make a safe space for students whose backgrounds are different from mine. In addition to housing books from writers of various backgrounds, I have chosen to showcase my love for travel and different cultures. Along with photographs from my trips around the globe, I exhibit a number of trinkets which have served as great conversation starters/relationship builders when students visit for office hours. While they may have only come for help on an essay, they often leave with a morsel of knowledge regarding my interests, and they've probably shared something about themselves with me, as well. For example, I may learn that someone has an aunt in Jamaica or has always wanted to visit the Taj Mahal, when they see my pictures and collectibles. I'll tell them about my relatives/in-laws from around the world and they tell me about theirs. These conversations lead to connections and engagement.

4 Utilize culturally appropriate classroom management techniques for a diverse population.

As a junior in college, I was absolutely mortified when my advanced composition professor paused her lecture to tell a classmate and me to either stop our conversation or carry it on outside. I didn't think we were being loud or obvious, but I recognized that my behavior was rude and felt ashamed. My friend and I immediately stopped talking and, red-faced, did our best to appear overly attentive during the rest of the class. This was a regular disciplinary technique I witnessed (albeit rarely *received*) throughout my educational career: the student misbehaves and the educator chastises.

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However, not everyone would react similarly to this public “calling out,” as it may cause a student embarrassment in front of his/her peers that can explode, rather than diffuse, a situation, causing the student to further act out rather than stop an undesired behavior. Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, and Curran (2004) discuss five pillars of culturally responsive classroom management; one of these is the “ability and willingness to use culturally appropriate management strategies,” which involves reflection on whether or not treatment to students is equitable as well as appropriate to their cultural norms, such as giving praise or critique individually versus in a group setting (p.32). Across racial lines, I have personally had more success and created less conflict by using proximity and one-on-one conversation to redirect behavior.

“Calling out” can also feel like racial targeting when the student is one of color and the teacher is not. Angela described a classroom experience where everyone in her class was talking and laughing, but the professor chastised her, the only student of color, for her behavior. “He said, ‘You’re distracting the class.’ I was just *laughing*. Why’d he have to say something to *me*, but not to anyone else?”

Even positive attention in the classroom can be perceived as uncomfortable depending on one’s culture. While many students may glow with pride when the teacher praises performance on a test or essay, others may become mortified. For example, in her book *Teaching Other People’s Children: Literacy and Learning in a Bilingual Classroom* (1999), Cindy Ballenger describes how she unintentionally made her Haitian students uncomfortable by commending their efforts in front of peers. To alleviate this, it’s simple enough to ask the student’s permission before shelling out public praise.

Conclusion

While these strategies can help, teachers in training will not learn true cultural responsiveness by attending a class or reading an article; it’s a work in progress that should be built and developed with time, dialogue, and open-mindedness. As educators and people, we all need to continue developing and learning how to better understand and work with our students. Pushing ourselves and the teachers we work with in the right direction, though, may make a world of difference.

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People who Train People

This series of interviews with people who train people allows readers who are language teacher trainers, educators and mentors to have a peep into the training rooms of those working in fields other than TESOL. Regular readers will know that we have heard so far from trainers in very varied professional areas, for example from trainers of doctors, occupational therapists, horse riders, midwives, Bridge players, saxophonists, bus drivers, choirs and orchestras. This time we get a glimpse into the world of a speech and language therapist in the UK and a speech and language pathologist in the USA.

Interview one

TW: Jean Barber, thanks for agreeing to be interviewed. I understand that you have been a speech and language therapist during a long career and are now mostly retired. Can you help us out with the basic question, what is speech and language therapy?

JB: Perhaps the easiest way to answer that is by reference to the web site of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) at www.rcslt.org and the National Health Service website at www.nhs.uk. There you can find answers like this one:

Speech and language therapy provides treatment, support and care for children and adults who have difficulties with communication, or with eating, drinking and swallowing.

Speech and language therapists (SLTs) are allied health professionals. They work with parents, carers and other professionals, such as teachers, nurses, occupational therapists and doctors. There are around 17,000 practising SLTs in the UK working in a wide variety of settings.

TW: That’s very clear, thanks! And what sort of settings do speech and language therapists work in?

JB: All sorts really. For example, in mainstream and special schools, in hospitals, in children’s centres, in courtrooms, prisons, and young offenders’ institutions. All sorts of places.

TW: And who do SLTs work with?

JB: With babies and children if there are feeding and swallowing difficulties or conditions such as cleft palate, dyslexia, hearing impairment, language delay, or language disorders, phonological (speech sound) difficulties, stammering and so on.

TW: How about with adults?

JB: Yes, this tends to be, for example, with communication or eating and swallowing problems following neurological impairments and degenerative conditions, including stroke, head injury or, say, Parkinson's disease. There are also specialist services for adults who stammer.

TW: How do you train to be a speech and language therapist (SLT) in the UK?

JB: To practise as a speech and language therapist, you have to be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). And to register with them, you first need to successfully complete an approved degree, which takes three or four years full time or up to six years part time. There are also some postgraduate courses which usually take 2 years. Courses differ in name and content but all involve a lot of practical work with clients or patients.

TW: What do you need if you want to get onto one of these courses?

JB: To get on to a speech and language therapy degree course you usually need: three A levels, along with five GCSEs (grades A-C), including English language, maths and science, or alternative qualifications. Each institution sets its own entry requirements. But wherever you study, you will need to show that you have an understanding of speech and language difficulties. So, it's a good idea, if you can, to spend some time with a registered speech and language therapist to see what the work is like.

TW: Are you on the register for life or do you have to keep updating your skills?

JB: You can retain your name on the register by keeping your knowledge and skills up to date and paying an annual retention fee. SLTs usually also become members of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT).

TW: What sort of jobs have you had as a speech therapist during your career?

JB: I've only worked with children, never with adults. For most of the time it's been generalist work, mostly in community clinics. Earlier in my career, I worked in special schools with children who had mild and severe learning difficulties. I worked in an Emotional and Behavioral difficulties or EBD school. This was in my first year after qualifying. It was in a school for disturbed teenaged boys. I had absolutely no supervision. I seem to remember we spent most of the time playing cards!! I have also worked in a language unit with children with specific communication disorders, and in a mainstream school attached to a children's care home.

TW: How about specialist work?

JB: Yes, later in my career, I set up a service in the London Borough of Lambeth for children who stammer. I did this till I retired.

TW: Did you usually work with groups, in full classes, or pull children out of classes for a one to one?

JB: SLTs do all of these. My own clinic work was usually one to one or small groups, with parents actively involved

TW: What sort of things have you helped people with in the past?

JB: Language delay and specific disorder, speech sound delay and disorder, voice problems, stammering, parent advice and support.

TW: How did you do that?



JB: That's a hard one to answer. Therapy techniques are very wide-ranging and tailored to individual need, so it's difficult to be specific. In general terms – a child is referred, you assess them, make a diagnosis and decide on their 'care pathway'. You then give advice and put them on the waiting list. After this (12 weeks should be the maximum wait) you begin the treatment programme. In my day, that was usually a course of 6 weeks (though for stammering Lambeth allowed it to be open-ended). After that, the child was put 'on review' and seen in 3 or 6 months or whatever until they were considered either to need more support or were ready to be discharged.

TW: Now that you have retired, what sort of speech therapy work are you still doing?

JB: I volunteer one morning a week at my local village school, Bridge and Patribourne CEP School in Kent. Children's speech and language skills are assessed on entry to the Reception Class. That's the first year of primary schooling in the UK, aged about 4 or 5. The SENCO...

TW: Hang on! What's a SENCO?

JB: A SENCO is a special educational needs coordinator. That's a teacher who is responsible for special educational needs at school. The majority of UK schools have a SENCO and they work with other teachers and with parents to make sure that pupils with special educational needs get the right support and help they need at school.

TW: OK! Thanks!

JB: The SENCO will identify any pupils who need support (mainly with aspects of delayed language) and I will work with them. Other children are identified by staff as they progress through the school. My caseload has included children with language delay and disorder, speech sound difficulties, social communication difficulties, stammering and voice problems. At Bridge School I work with children in a separate room, either individually or in small groups.

TW: Have you noticed any big changes or any fashions in the work since you started X number of years ago?

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JB: I qualified in 1964. So that makes your 'X' 54 years ago! In those days you qualified and were then left to your own devices. You chose who to work with, what to do and for how long and were not really answerable to anyone. Now there is supervision, appraisal, peer and managerial support, evidence-based practice and evaluation. These are all good things. In the 1960s, assessment was minimal and informal and your equipment consisted mainly of pencils and paper. Now there is a plethora of assessment tools and therapy programmes and numerous companies producing them commercially. Again, this is a good thing.

TW: Any downsides?

JB: Yes. Because of current financial constraints there are limitations in the number of SLTs employed, despite the great demand. Then there is more emphasis today on assessment and the SLT support is often simply giving advice or home-programmes to parents and teachers. It is becoming harder for children to get access to actual hands-on therapy. So, I think today's SLTs may not have the same satisfaction of working directly with clients and seeing their progress through to the end.

The other significant difference is that my starting salary was £585 p.a. (including a £20 London weighting). A therapist who qualified in 2018, entering the NHS now, starts on Band 1 at £15,404! But actually, that isn't all that much these days, is it?

"It is becoming harder for children to get access to actual hands-on therapy."

TW: There seems to be an increase in demand for the services of SLTs. Why do you think this might be?

JB: It might be because there is much more awareness these days of the range and complexity of communication difficulties and disorders and how they affect learning and social interaction. I think in the past many children's language difficulties were overlooked and not understood. In recent years, for example, the number of children identified with autistic spectrum disorders has grown enormously. There also used to be a lack of knowledge among referring agents, people such as doctors and other professionals. An example here is that many people who stammer report that when they first started stammering their parents were told that they would 'grow out of it'.

At the same time the SLT profession itself has developed, through research and increase in skills, so there are more specialisms to offer support for a wider range of disorders. Naturally once a treatment exists, understandably people want it.

Interview two

TW: Clare Hogan, thanks for agreeing to be interviewed. I understand that you have trained as a speech and language pathologist and are starting your career now, working in a secondary school in the USA. Can you help us out with the basic question, what is speech and language pathology for you in the USA?

CH: Sure. In my position in an elementary school, speech-language pathology means working with students who have non developmentally-appropriate pronunciation errors (this is the "speech" part) and/or significant challenges with language. Examples of language difficulties include using a shorter than expected sentence length (think of 5-year olds who are still speaking in 3-4-word phrases or 9-year olds who are not yet using compound sentences), consistent grammatical errors, and who have difficulty learning or retrieving vocabulary. We also work with students who struggle with comprehending the language that they hear. In addition, we can work with students who stutter and those who need explicit instruction to learn social skills.

Some of my students have developmental disabilities like autism or Down Syndrome, but most of the students who need my services for language support have what we call "Specific Language Impairment," meaning their significant struggles are not due to any other disorder.

TW: And what sort of settings do speech and language pathologists (SLPs) work in, in the USA?

CH: We categorize the settings into "educational" or "medical." Educational settings include schools and private clinics that target the difficulties described above. Medical settings include hospitals and clinics that support clients who have executive functioning deficits due to a traumatic brain injury, clients who have lost language abilities due to a stroke, for example, individuals with voice or swallowing disorders, and infants or young children who have trouble with breast feeding or eating in general. As you can see, it is a very wide scope of practice! Our graduate school provides training in all of these areas.

TW: And who do SLPs work with?

CH: In the schools, we often work closely with the special education teacher, an occupational therapist, and sometimes a physical therapist or a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing.

TW: How do you train to be a speech and language pathologist (SLP) in the USA?

CH: It is a 2-year master's degree program. But prior to entering the program you either have to have received a bachelor's degree in Communication Sciences (the name of the program varies by school) or have taken a year's worth of classes in the field through post-baccalaureate studies, which is what I did.

TW: Are you on any kind of register state or country wide after training? And if so, are you on the register for life or do you have to keep updating your skills?

CH: I am a member of our national governing board, American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) as well as a state board. And, yes, we are required to take continuing education courses for a certain number of hours each year to maintain these certifications.



TW: Do you usually work with groups, in full classes, or pull children out of classes for a one to one?

CH: I usually work with my students one-on-one or in pairs in my office. When I'm working on pronunciation, though, I use a model where I pull a student out of her or his classroom for approximately 7 minutes, 3-4 times per week. We work in the hallway, in the staff mail room, anywhere that is close to their classroom, so we don't waste time walking to my office. The idea behind this model is that they get frequent practice and a high number of repetitions of their sound in a short period of time. I do see most of my language and social skills students once per week for a 30-minute session. I then try to provide strategies to classroom teachers to help the student generalize the skills we're working on.

TW: What sort of things do you help the children with?

CH: As I mentioned earlier, I help students with pronunciation, using and understanding age-appropriate language, and social communication skills. But I haven't yet mentioned that in the schools, we often work on literacy skills which are closely tied to language abilities. These skills might include sequencing the steps in a task or the parts of a story, naming the main idea and supporting details of a text, comparing and contrasting, and inferencing, just to name a few. In the area of social communication, I help students with skills like understanding non-verbal communication, understanding that other people have thoughts that are different from your own, awareness of emotions and how to deal with them, big problems versus little problems, rigid vs. flexible thinking, etc.

TW: How do you do that?

CH: This is a big question! But in general, my job is to explicitly teach the speech and language skills that other children have naturally picked up on, whether that be vocabulary, social skills, grammar, etc. Then we practice, practice, practice. We know that these kids will require plenty of repetition because learning language is simply harder for them. There are many ways to provide speech-language therapy, but I use a variety of methodologies such as using story books, playing movement games, doing craft activities, making videos, using iPad apps, and doing drill-based therapy with intermittent reinforcements. I keep data as often as possible, and as students improve their skills, I increase the challenge and/or decrease my levels of support. Some key components to success include making sure students can name the skills they're working on, letting them be aware of their own progress towards a goal, and communicating with classroom teachers, other staff, and parents about how they can support a student's use of a specified skill.

"I like that I have the flexibility to teach the skills in a wide variety of ways and that I get to be creative in my therapy."

TW: What do you like about the work?

CH: I like that I have the flexibility to teach the skills in a wide variety of ways and that I get to be creative in my therapy. Also, many of my students struggle in general in school and so I love that I can provide instruction where they can feel successful working on a skill with my individualized support. And along these lines, I love that I get to build strong personal relationships with each student.

TW: Any downsides?

CH: The paperwork. There is so much of it in the school setting because there are federal mandates under special education law (speech-language therapy is a special education service). It can be quite overwhelming, so I'm grateful that the time I spend with my students is so rewarding.

Jean Barber and Clare Hogan comment

CH: It was fun to read your responses, Jean. Sounds like you've had a long and fulfilling career.

JB: And it sounds like there is a lot in common both sides of the pond. Clare – I'd be interested to know how SLP is financed in the USA. Is there government funding for SLP services? Is the therapy free of charge to clients in schools and medical establishments or do they have to pay for it? Unfortunately, SLT services in the UK have been quite restricted in recent years due to government funding cuts to the NHS and local authorities. All best wishes – and I don't envy you the paperwork!

CH: Yes, it sounds like our services may be a bit better covered financially here. In private settings it depends on the family's insurance (private or a government program like Medicaid). I don't know too much about this, but at a clinic where I did an internship, many more well-off families were only covered for maybe 8 sessions by their insurance (private insurance, I'm sure). But at the clinic here where a lot of my low-income students go, they seem to be supported for years if they need to be, which is wonderful.

In the schools it's all covered for students. About 15% is federally funded, and the rest is covered by the school district. We can bill Medicaid to get some of the school district's money reimbursed and a percentage back to us! Yes, this is more paperwork.

All the best to you too. I hope you are enjoying being mostly retired!



Journal Exchanges

"The Teacher Trainer" has arranged journal exchanges with

IATEFL Newsletter (UK)
Modern English Teacher (UK)
English Teaching professional (UK)

and is abstracted by

'Language Teaching',
The British Education Index
and Contents Pages in Education.

and now has a link up with
EBSCO Publishing

The Irish Research Scheme for Teaching: An interview with Chris Farrell

I bumped into Chris Farrell, Head of Teacher Development for the Centre of English Studies (CES), UK and Ireland at a Sunday conference in London in June, 2018. We were both bemoaning the lack of coffee. Chris told me a little about the Irish Research Scheme for Teaching 2017-18 and agreed to be interviewed about it.

TW: Chris, what is the Irish Research Scheme for Teaching and what has it to do with TESOL teachers and trainers?

CF: The Irish Research Scheme for Teaching is a grassroots Action Research organisation for teaching in Ireland that is in its third year. It is a non-profit project focusing on encouraging those involved in education to develop the ability to critically analyse aspects of teaching, to conduct research and experiments, and share considerations of best practice.

TW: So, when you say 'teaching' does that mean all subjects?

CF: The scheme has been done by ELT Teachers, Trainers, Directors of Studies, EAP teachers, and Young Learner teachers. It is not limited to ELT and I would like to include state sector teachers eventually if they are interested.

TW: Why was it set up?

CF: It was set up for a number of reasons, most notably to promote the idea of teachers as academics and to foster a spirit of cooperation amongst teaching staff in Ireland. It is intended to create a dialogue within the ELT industry in Ireland around teaching and to create an ethos of enquiry across schools and among the teaching community at large. It is open to anybody involved in teaching and there are a number of different forms of academic support which provide some sort of guidance to teachers as they undertake their research projects.

TW: When was it launched?

CF: The programme was dreamt up in 2015. Following some research and some convincing of people to participate, the pilot was launched in 2016, to run in the year between the ELT Ireland Annual Conferences which are held in February. There were originally five brave research participants, each looking at a different aspect of their own classroom practice.

TW: What is your involvement in the project?

CF: In my role as Head of Teacher Development in CES UK and Ireland, I get an excellent insight into what is happening in the ELT sector in the UK, as well as in Ireland. I was so impressed by the English UK Action Research Award Scheme from attending the English UK Teachers' conference that I really wanted to emulate it here in Ireland. I figured the best thing to do was to give it a go and see if I could set it up myself. All I really needed was a name for the project and a logo, for the appetite and the aptitude was here in Ireland already. So, armed with a title, logo, empty blog, and Twitter handle, I emailed a lot of Directors, Teachers, and Trainers that I knew and asked them if they would like to get involved in a pilot scheme. In the meantime, I read everything I could on Action Research (AR), so I could at least sound knowledgeable at meetings! We had already been running three-month AR projects internally in CES, so I was familiar with the process. But this was a much bigger undertaking.

TW: And how did you get on?

CF: This pilot project was a massive learning curve for me, as I had no real idea of the practicalities and limitations of the project, just an idea of what generally should be done. The teacher-researchers in that first year were so helpful and patient in being the guinea pigs. They told me that the time frames and word counts that I had envisaged were not feasible! However, the work documented during this pilot scheme allowed me to get sponsorship for the launch of the project. That is how Trinity College London came on board. The project was formally launched as the Trinity Irish Research Scheme for Teaching (TIRST) at the ELT Ireland Annual Conference in February 2017.

TW: Any concerns?

CF: My one major concern was, and is still, to an extent, being able to provide appropriate academic support throughout the project in terms of launch, drafting, etc. This is why I was delighted when Trinity College, London came on board and Ben Beaumont, TESOL Qualifications Manager, took a very hands-on approach to the project, providing me with very steady support and a sounding board for ideas.

TW: Why academic research for teachers?

CF: To be honest, the concept of this project being solely about 'academic' research can be contested. I had my ideas of what this should be from the outset, and they were lofty things like training teachers to be critical in their self-reflection and encouraging teachers to look at issues arising in their lessons. However, I must say that I have learned a number of things about teachers and 'academic' research in the past few years.

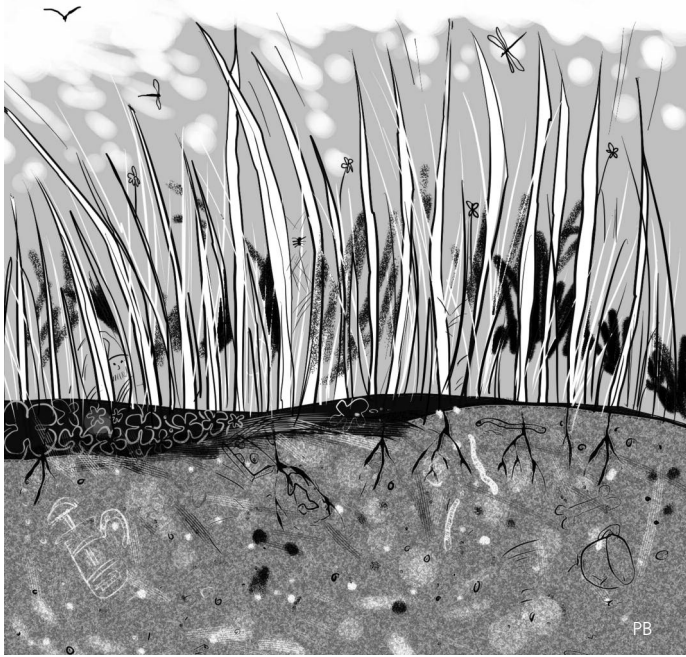
TW: What sorts of things?

CF: Well, here goes then!

1. The very act of beginning to reflect on what is happening in the classroom is the biggest step of all.
2. Teachers are often put off by the notion of 'academic' research as they believe that there must be a high degree of academic rigour to it all, which is not necessarily the case.
3. Teachers are sometimes unwilling to admit that they don't know something, or that they may have to focus a little more on that something.
4. Teacher research is investigation into what is happening in the classroom. It doesn't require a huge amount of background reading and is pretty straightforward to do. But it often motivates the teacher to go and do that extra background reading, and encourages them to put a greater emphasis on the academic thoroughness of their research.

TW: What has been done so far?

CF: So, as I said, the Pilot Year was 2016-2017, and there were five participants. The launch of the proper project was in February 2017 and anyone interested was to email me. They were given a proposal document to complete and the deadline of late May to submit an idea. We had nine different projects for the year's scheme, some individuals, some groups. I took the decision early on not to reject any proposals. For me the point is the participation, not the research topic. There was a Project Launch day held in CES Dublin in early June, 2017 and all participants were invited to speak for 5-10 minutes about their research proposal.



Grassroots research

The rest of the group could give advice and offer help on trimming down the research question, if necessary, and suggesting the best types of data collection methods. Considering that this was the first time that a lot of the participants had met, the event was absolutely fantastic and convinced me that this project was something that other teachers wanted. It wasn't just me! Ben from Trinity also did some sessions on data collection methods and other basic considerations for AR. This made the whole process really transparent and doable and that helped feed into and create the whole ethos of the project.

TW: How would you describe the ethos?

CF: This is a grassroots research project where the process not the product is the point.

TW: Okay, so then what happened?

CF: The draft projects for 2016-17 were submitted in November and reviewed by both myself and Ben before final submissions in January, 2018. All in all, 6 of the 9 projects ended in complete research documents, which were put together in a document and posted on the IRST blog. Five of these projects were presented at the ELT Ireland Conference, with one being presented at both IATEFL and the Equals Conference. The 2018-2019 project was launched again at the ELT Ireland conference with the same process followed. This time there are 11 projects in the works. We followed the same timetable with a Launch Day in early June, the only change being migrating the groups from WhatsApp to Slack. The plan for this year is to have a second meet-up day in September to go through the Writing up and Presenting of the projects.

TW: Could you give us a taste of the topics that have been researched so far?

CF: I found something of interest in all of the research projects presented so, to pick out two at random:

1. *Project Based Learning: Benefits, Constraints and Reflection* by Christina Barni, Ankie Janssen, Margaret McCarthy, David Moran, Adam O'Regan, Aileen Slattery, Matthew Watson (CEC). This was an excellent collective project which the whole group really bought into. This was presented at IATEFL, ELT Ireland Annual Conference, and at the Equals Conference and got some great feedback.

2. *Learner Perceptions of Corpora* by Cat Bennett (UCD). Cat put a huge amount of work into this project and it was really well written up and presented. Any research project which focuses on learner perceptions is important.

TW: What's happening next?

CF: Onwards and upwards! There is a growing awareness of the scheme in Ireland and the teachers who are involved seem to enjoy it. It is infrequent for teachers to be trusted enough to go and do what they actually want to do in a teaching and academic context. The relaxed nature of this project, and the fact that you can get to know teachers who have the same views and beliefs that you have is a big benefit of the scheme. As I said before, I am looking to add a little bit more academic rigour in the project as we go on, and to ensure that the participants are as empowered as possible in future to present their research.

TW: How can teachers get involved in this?

CF: Teachers in Ireland can email me at irstprojects@gmail.com. Anyone can check out our blog at: <https://irishresearchschemeoforteaching.wordpress.com/blog/>.

Then you can find us on Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/IrishRST>

I would really like teachers and trainers outside of Ireland to take notice of the scheme and give the participants some recognition for the great work they have done and are doing.

TW: Why do you think teachers should get involved?

CF: I suppose that this scheme is attempting to professionalise the practices of the ELT profession in Ireland from the perspective of what goes on in the classroom. This project will provide you with some support, both academically and morally, as you develop as a teacher.

TW: Our readers (mostly teacher trainers, teacher educators and teacher mentors) may wonder how the scheme manages to motivate teachers to take part, since teachers are already so busy with planning, teaching, meetings, test marking and so on.

CF: First of all, this scheme puts you in touch with teachers in other institutions who are always available for a coffee and a chat if you want to blow off some steam! The idea for these AR projects is to focus on something that you want to do better or know better in your job. As a result, this process does aim to make your job easier. The time constraints are obviously a massive barrier, and that is why we are so easy-going in terms of the depth and scope of the project and in terms of deadlines!

TW: Thanks, Chris!

The Author



Chris Farrell is the Head of Teacher Development with Centre of English Studies Ireland and UK. He holds an MA and a Cambridge Delta and lectures on the MA TESOL in University College, Dublin. He is a Committee member with the IATEFL Teacher Development Special Interest Group (TDSIG) and with EAP in Ireland. He has written a number of articles and was the co-editor of the Equals Members' blog. He regularly speaks at international conferences on behalf of CES and Equals. Email: christopherpatrickf@gmail.com, irstprojects@gmail.com Twitter: @ChrisPatrickF

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Positivity for teacher wellbeing: A training course to help language teachers flourish

By Elena Ončevska Ager, Republic of Macedonia and Sarah Mercer, Austria

Introduction

Rates of teacher burnout appear to be on the increase in a number of countries (Fernet et al., 2012; Grayson and Alvarez, 2008; Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2009). There are many reasons for this, including increasingly heavy workloads, blurred personal and professional life boundaries, limited control over institutional factors, increased administrative chores, little collegial support, and challenging teacher-student relationships (see, e.g., De Heus and Diekstra, 1999; Spilt et al., 2011). Within the language teaching profession specifically, there are a number of additional factors that can contribute to teacher levels of stress including temporary contracts, language anxiety, and intercultural tensions (Longwell, 2018; Piechurska-Kuciel, 2011). Yet, research shows that teachers with high levels of wellbeing not only teach better and more creatively, but their students also achieve better (Jennings and Greenberg, 2009). It is, therefore, surprising that very few (if indeed any) professional development programmes focus on supporting teacher wellbeing. We decided to counter this trend by offering an online course on language teacher wellbeing for a group of English language teachers based in the Republic of Macedonia. In this article, we describe the course and share some preliminary insights from the feedback we received, with the hope that we may inspire other teacher educators to consider incorporating training elements focusing on teacher wellbeing into their programmes.

The course: Aims, approach, and participants

The online teacher training course was entitled *Positivity for Teacher Wellbeing* and was offered to English language teachers based in the Republic of Macedonia working at all levels and in all sectors. In our call for participation, we explained the aims and rationale for the course as follows:

“We [...] believe passionately that language teacher wellbeing is vitally important if we want to be able to teach to the best of our abilities. We do not see wellbeing as an optional extra. It is at the core of not only being a good teacher, but being able to be a great teacher. It is essential for flourishing in life more generally.

[...] Unlike most professional development events, this online teacher training course is not about what you can do for your learners. This is about what you can do for YOU. We envisage it as 100% teacher time, though most of the activities that you will be engaging in are also easily adaptable for the language classroom and could be used with learners to improve their wellbeing, too!”

Most typically, approaches to wellbeing focus on developing strategies to deal with causes of stress and negativity. While that is indeed one important approach, another option is to focus on positives, reflecting on how these can help strengthen and improve the professional wellbeing of language educators. This is the predominant approach that we decided to adopt, with the aim of enhancing the teachers' quality of life at work and beyond. We felt that a positivity focus would be relevant for all teachers, no matter what their perceived levels of stress.

“Most typically, approaches to wellbeing focus on developing strategies to deal with causes of stress and negativity.”

A total of 31 teachers with a wide range of teaching experience, from recently graduated to many years of experience, initially signed up for the course. They taught between 6 and 28 hours per week in a variety of contexts (primary, secondary and tertiary; state and private; online and face-to-face). Of this group, 22 teachers stayed on till the end of the course and took part in all components. All the participants were women and we have considered that the wording of the call and the topic focus may have appealed more to female teachers in this context than to male. It is something we have reflected on for future formats of the course.

Course structure

The course started with a one-hour webinar on the background to positivity for teacher wellbeing, delivered by the second author. The webinar introduced relevant research foregrounding the importance of wellbeing for effective teaching and it presented the underlying rationale behind the approach taken. Wellbeing was defined following Seligman's (2011) PERMA model, which comprises the five aspects: Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment. According to this model, wellbeing is more than experiencing positive emotions. It depends on how involved we are in what we do, the quality of relationships we nurture, the meaning we take from life, and our sense of achievement in what we do in all aspects of our lives. In addition to presenting the overall rationale for the course, the initial webinar also discussed the P of PERMA (Positive emotion) and the different types of positive emotions and their role in sustainable wellbeing. Each of the other 4 weeks of the course focused on the remaining aspects of Seligman's (2011) model in turn: Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment.

All the teachers were registered on the online platform Hive (<http://hive.bz/>). Each week teachers were given short video links or articles to read outlining the content and rationale of the aspects being focused on in that week. To encourage reflection and interaction between the participants, there were forum discussions related to the weekly topics which the teachers were invited to join as and when they could. These forum discussions proved to be an important community space, especially for those teachers who drew on the group as a source of motivation.

Parallel to this, every day (Monday to Friday), we emailed the teachers short reflective tasks connected to the weekly topics. The teachers were encouraged to reflect on these privately, in so-called 'Wellbeing Diaries'. We highlighted the value of teachers responding to these tasks in writing rather than merely thinking about them, as a way to improve their focus and quality of engagement. We also suggested that the teachers may want to re-visit any tasks that they found to be especially useful for them personally in order to develop wellbeing habits.

At the end of each week, we asked the teachers to reflect on their weekly learning about wellbeing. They could write freely but to support their reflection, we also suggested possible areas they could consider such as: key themes that emerged for them, activities they found useful and enjoyable (or not), difficulties they experienced, and plans to take further steps for the week's topic after the course.

We were aware that with the teachers' busy schedules, the course activities (engaging in forum discussions, writing their Wellbeing Diaries, and reflecting weekly) might feel overwhelming for some.

“We repeatedly explicitly stressed the importance of the teachers themselves deciding on their personal degree of commitment.”

Therefore, we repeatedly explicitly stressed the importance of the teachers themselves deciding on their personal degree of commitment, choosing to do the activities that they felt might be most useful for them personally and not feeling guilty if they didn't manage to explore all that was offered on the course.

To extend the social aspect of the course, we also provided real-time opportunities for sharing and connecting with colleagues by offering three more webinars: one half way through the course, one right at the end of the course, and one two months after the teachers completed the course. We used these opportunities to respectively take stock of each other's learning, plan our future wellbeing journeys, and discuss our unfolding wellbeing experiences beyond the course.

In Figure 1 below, we summarise the course structure:

<i>Webinar 1 (Introduction to course and focus on Positive emotion)</i>
Week 1: Focus on Engagement
Week 2: Focus on Relationships
<i>Webinar 2 (Taking stock)</i>
Week 3: Focus on Meaning
Week 4: Focus on Accomplishment
<i>Webinar 3 (Taking stock and planning future wellbeing journeys)</i>
<i>Webinar 4 (Discussing wellbeing experiences beyond course)</i>

Figure 1: Summarised course structure

Course feedback

The teachers who took part generously agreed to share some of their weekly reflections on the course and they completed a questionnaire at the end, which they granted us permission to use for research purposes. This generated a large amount of data which is currently being analysed. However, from our preliminary analysis of the data, it is apparent that these teachers responded positively to and engaged with the course and its activities.

For example, 18 out of the 20 teachers who completed the questionnaire reported that they appreciated the daily tasks as opportunities to develop regular wellbeing habits, rating them as useful or very useful. However, only half the cohort reported being able to follow the pace of a reflection task every day. The others reported choosing to only do or redo those tasks that were particularly relevant and meaningful to them, rather than a new one every day.

Regarding the weekly reflections, 15 out of 20 teachers reported that these were useful in consolidating their learning and taking stock reflecting on its implications. The teachers who did not find the weekly reflections useful either felt they were too time-consuming or viewed them as simple summaries of what they had already reflected on during the week and thus adding nothing new to their learning.

The discussion forums and the webinars were generally well appreciated for their (a)synchronous social element, with 18 and 16 teachers respectively finding them beneficial. The teachers welcomed the exposure to various perspectives on the topics, and the reassurance that they were not alone on their wellbeing journeys. Two teachers had reservations with regard to the online discussion forums, which they either struggled to find time to participate in or did not find interesting.

"I have never consciously considered how my wellbeing is affected by the profession. Now, I know better"

Overall, the course appeared to be useful in supporting the teachers in continuing to maintain their wellbeing in the future beyond the course, with 19 out of the 20 teachers suggesting so in their questionnaire responses. This sustainability and commitment is illustrated in the following quote by one of the teachers: "I have never consciously considered how my wellbeing is affected by the profession. Now, I know better, I know when to say 'no' and to respect my own free time". The other teachers also set wellbeing resolutions following the end of the course and these included focusing more on the positives in life, developing a habit of some of the daily tasks, and consciously addressing the 'wellbeing triangle' (sleep, nutrition and exercise). The reported impact also fed into their teaching. Two teachers reported thinking about adapting some of the daily tasks and incorporating them into course tasks for their learners, in order to, as one of them said, "spread the wellbeing bug".

Example course activities

To illustrate the kind of activities that the teachers reported positively on, we present two daily reflective tasks that we used in Week 1 (Focus on Engagement). The week began with input on character strengths and teachers were encouraged to take the VIA online character strengths survey (www.viacharacter.org/www/Character-Strengths-Survey). There was a forum discussion task around this input, entitled 'Your strengths' in which teachers became comfortable talking about their strengths as educators and how they used these in their work. Following on from this, we used the following daily tasks (Daily Tasks 1 and 2) to expand on the topic:

Daily Task 1: Of your five VIA character strengths, which would you say is your signature strength? Why do you think this is your strong point? What did you do today that used that strength and how can you plan to use it tomorrow? Feel free to re-visit this entry and add your insights after having consciously drawn on your strengths in your daily life.

Daily Task 2: Describe when you last experienced something very positive at work that was connected to your strengths. Re-create the memory of that experience. Reflect on how it feels and how it felt at the time to be able to be successful and use your character strength.

We also repeated some of the daily tasks that research has suggested are especially conducive to improved wellbeing. Two such tasks, which the teachers were enthusiastic about in their feedback, were the Gratitude Task (Daily Task 3) and the Silver Linings Task (Daily Task 4):

Daily Task 3: Feeling grateful for things in our lives is a key source of wellbeing. Research has shown how reflecting on what we are grateful for every day can boost our positivity, mood, and indeed health. Sometimes we must think consciously about all the positive things in our lives that we are grateful for and take care not to get overwhelmed by a focus on the negatives. Write down three things you are grateful for today. These can be small things (e.g., The gorgeous snowy landscape out of the window this morning) or large (e.g., Getting in touch with relatives overseas that I had lost touch with). The more specific you are in your gratitude, the better. A focus on people or experiences that you are grateful for/to might be more rewarding than focusing on things, although these are worth consciously appreciating too. It is good not to take for granted a roof over your head, warmth, and enough food to eat. Gratitude can also come from reflecting on outcomes you may have avoided (e.g. Simply returning from a journey safely).

continued >>>

Daily Task 4: Has anything not gone as you had hoped so far this week? Briefly describe what happened. There is always a way to see something positive in everything – it is called looking out for silver linings. Sometimes we don't need to look too hard and other times, we need to really look hard! For instance, imagine you end up stuck on the bus in a traffic jam, and so you were not able to make it for a webinar you so wished to attend. The silver lining could be that on the bus was a childhood friend that you hadn't seen in ages and with whom you enjoyed a catch-up or it could be that you had quiet time to think without distractions about an interesting work project.

Conclusion

As teachers appear to be particularly vulnerable to burnout, it makes sense for teacher educators and teacher education institutions to act preventatively by supporting teachers in strengthening their wellbeing. Such investment in teachers' psychological resources is likely to result in professionals who are better able to deal both with the minor, daily stressors, as well as with the more harmful, consistent sources of stress, at the workplace and in life more generally. If we wish to retain dedicated educators in the profession, we need to help equip them with strategies to sustain their wellbeing over their career span so they can teach to the best of their abilities and flourish in their professional roles. From our experiences with this course, we feel one way to do this is to explicitly employ a 'positivity' perspective in the context of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and we would argue also in pre-service training. Ideally, as we were able to do, CPD programmes would offer entire courses dedicated to teacher wellbeing.

However, should that ideal scenario not be possible for whatever reasons, we still hope to encourage other trainers and teacher educators to find ways to incorporate even single sessions and sets of activities into their training programmes. Teachers themselves are the most valuable resource in language teaching and their wellbeing should be a primary concern for all involved in language education.

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Observation and Feedback

Observing, reflecting on and redesigning English classes

By Dr U Venkateswara and Dr Divya John, India

Introduction

English language teaching today stresses the need for the lifelong professional development of teachers. The study reported in this article is based on Richards's (1991) view that in order to reach a higher level of awareness in teaching, it is best to observe and reflect on one's own teaching and then bring about any necessary changes. He names this approach "reflective teaching," a system of bringing about professional growth in teaching. Our study is based on the hypothesis that the teaching of English in undergraduate engineering classes can also be enhanced by observing, reflecting on and redesigning the English classes.

Relevant literature

According to many writers, observing the class of a teacher is a powerful way of collecting data and giving the teacher meaningful tips towards the improvement of teaching and language learning (Wajnryb, 1992). Classroom observation is thought to offer opportunities for teachers to enhance their abilities, awareness, aptitude to interact, and to appraise their own teaching behaviour (Williams, 1989). It can provide teachers with quality insights. Classroom observation can be conducted by: (1) external agencies, or (2) peer-teachers (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011).

Reflection is the analysis of what is done in the classroom to find out how teaching can be improved upon (Richards, op cit). It helps in finding solutions to the problems that teachers encounter. It enables the teacher to understand teaching styles, develop a variety of strategies and attain greater effectiveness in teaching. Richards & Farrell (2008) also maintain that reflection is an opportunity for professional development. Redesigning the English class is, centrally, for the sake of the students in it.

Traditionally, classroom observation has been conducted mainly for assessment purposes. (Sheal, 1989; Wajnryb, 1992). As Richards and Farrell (2008) point out, observation tends to be identified with evaluation and is often regarded as a threatening or negative experience. It is a fact that some teachers become anxious and nervous when observed. In contrast, reflection and reflective practices have been more accepted by many teachers and teacher-educators. In short, classroom observation and reflection can be used as the basis for redesigning language lessons for the development of students and teachers and not simply as a means to judge them.

The present study in brief

The study was conducted at an engineering college in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, by the first author and a co-practitioner who decided to experiment by teaching speaking skills collaboratively in three first-semester engineering classes taught by each other. At the beginning of the study, they conducted a focus-group interview with their department faculty to find out the challenges faced in the classroom, and made a checklist of the following questions for a proper understanding of the objectives of the study:

- What are the challenges that teachers face when teaching English speaking skills?
- Can measures be taken in the classroom to improve speaking skills?

- How can observation be carried out in the English classroom?
- How can reflection help in improving speaking skills?
- How can teaching materials be redesigned to improve English speaking skills?

The first author and the co-practitioner chose three methods to motivate students to speak – two methods jointly and one method individually. The joint methods were: "Marker-pen Sessions" and "Cheer-up Sessions." The third method, left to their individual discretion was given the title, "Fun Sessions." The teachers agreed to observe each other's classes and list the shortcomings in the conduct of the activities. Then they reflected on the changes needed and recorded these for further action. The process was repeated in the classes according to the availability of time.

1 The Marker-pen Sessions

The students were divided into groups and each group was given five different coloured marker pens – Blue, Green, Orange, Yellow and Red. The leader of the group had to choose one of the coloured marker pens and request all the group members to speak holding the particular marker pen, one by one for two minutes each. The first author and the co-practitioner selected current topics of interest to the students. For example, topics like: "The present educational scenario in India," "The examination system in the University," or "Internal assessment in colleges" were taken up for discussion. When all the members of the group had completed one round of speaking, they could do away with that marker pen and choose another coloured marker pen until all the groups had completed speaking on all the five coloured marker pens. The first author and the co-practitioner observed one of the marker-pen sessions used in each other's classes and reflected on improving their classes.

2 The Cheer-up Sessions

The students were divided into groups and given a handout of simple interview questions for a cheer-up session. For example, "Tell me about your hometown," "The school you went to," "Your ambition in life," and so on. One member took the centre position and the rest of the group members would ask questions from the handout. The process is repeated by every member being questioned by the rest of the group members. Later on, the students could frame their own questions based on the handout. At the same time, the students were warned against asking hurtful questions, such as: "What marks did you get for the Chemistry exam? (an exam they failed in)." In case a question was hurtful or uncomfortable, students had the freedom not to answer but instead to counteract with an apology, "Sorry, could you ask me another question please?" This practice continued with different questions each time as per the time available. The first author and the co-practitioner sat in one of each other's cheer-up sessions and pondered on how to make the classes better.

3 The Fun Sessions

The first author and the co-practitioner each employed several techniques to motivate students in their own classes to speak. They used different methods from each other. The first author played games in the class because it energized students to speak freely. He also asked students to narrate stories to increase their confidence in speaking. At times he used pictures to prompt them to speak.

continued >>>

The co-practitioner used slightly different methods: "My technique is to ask students to talk about their personal experiences. I ask them supplementary questions based on their narration. I also rely on slides and cartoon strips to provide them with a congenial atmosphere to speak." The first author and the co-practitioner monitored one of each other's fun sessions and reflected on how to redesign them for the future.

Results and Discussion

1 Discussion of "The Marker-pen Sessions"

It was observed that the Marker-pen Sessions succeeded in instilling a sense of responsibility and a healthy competitive spirit among the students. To succeed in the performance, the proficient students eagerly enabled the less proficient ones to participate by providing them with hints. To their dismay, the first author and the co-practitioner saw that while they were busy observing the class, the proficient students indulged in too much chatting thus turning the speaking classes into noisy sessions. They discussed the problem and agreed among themselves to keep the proficient students engaged by giving them the additional duty of noting down the proceedings in the class. This responsibility made them rather quiet.

2 Discussion of "The Cheer-up Sessions"

Interestingly enough, the first author and the co-practitioner faced almost the same problem in the three classes allotted to them, though with varying difficulties in degree and kind. Both of them had classes each where there was (1) a marvellous response, (2) a moderate response, and (3) a meagre response, from the students.

In the classes where there was a marvellous response, i.e., active student participation, some students tended to dominate the sessions. The first author had to put an abrupt but polite end to this. The co-practitioner too had difficulties in silencing some dominant students to give opportunities to the silent ones to speak. Unfortunately, because of the overwhelming response, there was the problem of time management, and the sessions often ended without any time left for the feedback from the teacher of the class concerned on the matter and manner of the students' performance. Subsequently, the first author and the co-practitioner arrived at the conclusion that the cheer-up sessions should only raise questions based on the handout given. In addition, two of the proficient students were asked to note the allotted time for each question and answer, and when the allotted time was over, they were to shout "stop" loudly. The first author and the co-practitioner noted down their observations and gave a collective feedback to the students.

In the classes where the interaction was moderate, the first author and the co-practitioner decided to appoint a student who could speak well to initiate asking questions and raising new questions on their own. The result was encouraging in both cases.

In the classes where the interaction was meagre, the first author and the co-practitioner observed that the students could not express their views because of their low level of English. Both of them discussed the problem with the students and elicited some significant facts: Some of the students had no idea of the questions given; for example, "What is demonetization?" Many of them knew the question but felt that it was very difficult for them to speak on; a few others were not interested in some questions; while some others were shy to express themselves in ungrammatical English. After adequate reflection and discussion, the first author and the co-practitioner decided to choose topics that are interesting for the students and at an appropriate level.

3 Discussion of "The Fun Sessions"

The first author and the co-practitioner employed various teaching strategies like games, visuals, stories and drama activities they had gathered from word of mouth, textbooks, reference books, conferences, workshops, and personal experiences to encourage students to speak. The first author alternated between traditional methods and the modern technology available. The co-practitioner at first allowed the students to use their first language whenever they found expressing thoughts in the target language difficult, but in course of time insisted on their speaking in English only. Both teachers also incorporated a few songs to enable students to grasp the nuances of the target language.

Observing, reflecting on and redesigning the lessons

The first author and the co-practitioner observed the classes, reflected on them, and redesigned the lesson plans to improve upon the teaching-learning process. The results revealed that the process of observation and reflection was highly beneficial for the following reasons: It helped both professionals to share their experiences when faced with similar problems; enabled them to be involved in the discussions and arrive at suitable solutions; enhanced their learning through lateral thinking; encouraged them to give and take positive and constructive feedback to and from their peers; aided them in understanding the importance of listening empathetically; assisted them in self-realization by discussion with peers; and educated their misconceptions about classroom management.

The observation-stage motivated the first author and the co-practitioner to re-conceptualize the teaching style; consider every class or classroom as unique; act as true facilitators who can overcome a system that focuses only on examinations; develop the students' thinking ability; and convert the classroom into a practice ground for interaction.

During the reflection-stage, the first author and the co-practitioner pondered on the following points: preparing a congenial language-learning environment for the students; motivating them to organize their knowledge to speak; finding out what makes them passive during an activity; catering to the different levels of proficiency in the same class and improvising activities to promote communication.

During the redesign stage, the following factors required for a speaking activity were taken into consideration: choose the topic according to the learners' interest; use materials that are relevant; motivate the silent students to speak; monitor the class effectively; engage the proficient students successfully; appoint students to record and monitor the activity as per the stipulated rules.

Every stage of the study was valuable to the first author and the co-practitioner. The greatest challenge they faced was classroom management in general: non-participation by the slow learners, and domination by the over-confident ones. The teachers decided to refer to the students by their first names to acknowledge their individuality; empathize with their mistakes; have recourse to scaffolding at every stage to assist them; reduce the anxiety level in the classroom; give hints regarding the classroom rules; and maintain a benign atmosphere in the classroom.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to probe into the problems faced by the English teacher while teaching engineering undergraduates English speaking skills and to find practical solutions to such problems through observation, reflection and redesigning of the lesson plan with the collaboration of peer-teachers. The study concludes that dedicated teachers can collaborate with like-minded peers to delve deep into the pros and cons of their method of teaching and redesign their lesson plan to cater to the learners.

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Article Watch

Below are brief summaries of relevant articles from other journals.

ETp (*English Teaching Professional*) (www.etprofessional.com)

Issue 118, Sept. 2018. 'No one told me that! 2', by B. Davies & N. Northhall. This is the second article in a series primarily designed for teacher trainers with under two years of experience. It deals with giving workshops or 'input' sessions to pre- or in-service teachers.

Issue 119, Nov. 2018. 'Five things you always wanted to know about automated writing evaluation (but were too afraid to ask)', by N. Hockly, p.58. The latest in this ever-useful series on new technology, this article discusses what automated writing evaluation (AWE) is, whether it works, whether it should be used in ELT, and how we can use it to develop student/trainee writing.

latefl Voices (*The main publication of IATEFL*). *Issue 264, Sept/Oct. 2018, pp. 10-11.* (www.iatefl.org/newsletter/iatefl-voices-newsletter). 'Burnout: The elephant in the staffroom', by M. Ruda. This article offers a definition of burnout along with reasons why ESL teachers might be prone to it, thoughts about preventing it and about the role of managers, and what to do if you can't cope.

NATECLA Language Issues, 28/2, pp. 16-22. Winter 2017. (www.natecla.org.uk/content/566/Language-Issues-The-ESOL-journal). 'Training volunteers teaching English in refugee camps in Greece', by L. Ruas. This article describes the work of volunteer teachers of English and other languages in refugee camps in Greece,

focusing on the ways teacher trainers set out to give training particularly in lesson planning and structuring lessons and courses to volunteers without teaching experience.

Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice (www.tandf.co.uk/journals). *May 2018, vol. 24/4. 'Toward an understanding of EFL teacher culture: An ethnographic study in China', by H. Zhang, R. Yuan, & Q. Wang, pp. 413-430.* This study aims to investigate the professional culture of a group of EFL teachers in a high school in China. Relying on data gathered through field observation and in-depth interviews, the research findings show that the participants formed a positive work culture that evolved despite tensions.

Teachers and Teaching: Theory and practice, 24/7, pp. 768-787. Oct. 2018. (Taylor Francis: 'Personal and contextual factors related to teachers' experience with stress and burnout', by K. Andrews, R. Richards, M. Hemphill, & J. Thomas. Data were collected through interviews with 28 in-service teachers in the American Midwest who reported high or low burnout on a psychometric survey. Building from the findings, the authors present a model for understanding how the school environment influences teacher burnout.

Teaching and Teacher Education, 75, pp. 93-104. Oct. 2018. (www.elsevier.com). 'Teacher educators' professional learning: A literature review', by C. Ping, G. Schellings, & D. Beijaard. This article reports on a systematic review of what, how, and why teacher educators (TEs) learn. Seventy-five research articles were analysed. The



review indicates that there is no clear knowledge base essential for teacher educators' work; that TEs undertake different activities from which to learn; and that they generally experience the need to learn to do their work.

Teaching in Higher Education, 23/1, pp. 120-136. Jan. 2017 (Routledge: www.tandf.co.uk/journals). 'Designing the ideal school as a transformative process: An approach to promoting teacher identity in pre-service teachers', by A. Zur & R. Ravid. Using a metaphorical task, student teachers in an Israeli 'Master Teach' programme designed their ideal school at the start and again at the end of the course. The designs were compared. Findings highlight the potential of this approach to reveal obstacles – including narrow, imbalanced, inconsistent, and shallow perspectives; rigid patterns of thinking; and lack of emotional awareness – and help teachers overcome them.

Publications Received

The purpose of these thumbnail summaries of recent publications in ELT and related fields is to broadly indicate topic and points of interest to mentors, teacher trainers and teacher educators. Print size is noted only if unusual. Dimensions are indicated only if exceptionally small or large; E.g., 148pp+ means "148pp plus an informative roman numbered preface, etc.". All books are paperback unless otherwise stated. If the book is of a type that requires an index but an index is lacking, the lack is noted.

Penny Ur's 100 Teaching Tips. P. Ur. (2016). Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-1-316-50728-5, 120pp+. A light pocketbook for teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) The author has decades of classroom experience and has, additionally, written multiple classic books for TESOL teachers and language teacher trainers. The tips here, each one getting its own page, are stated clearly and simply. Rationales are given. The tips are grouped into 18 chapters. As an example, the chapter *Reading comprehension* includes six tips: 'Read aloud while students follow', 'Minimize guessing from context', 'Don't make students read aloud', 'Read and re-read', 'Use reader's theatre', and 'Vary comprehension task'. Sound interesting? It is. New teachers are likely to find this an outstandingly helpful book. Experienced teachers can find in it a good deal to think about.

Jack C. Richards' 50 Tips for Teacher Development. J. Richards. (2017). Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-1-108-40836-3, 120pp+. In the same series as the book reviewed just above, this one is also very practical and easy to read. And again the author is massively experienced in TESOL. A major element of the content of this book is presentation of strategies for development that are usable by teachers alone or in groups. Among the 12 chapters are: *Find out how you teach*, *Find out more about your learners*, *Review the language*

you use in teaching, *Develop your research skills*, and *Share your knowledge and skills*. As an example of contents, the chapter *Engage in critical reflections* includes these tips: 'Learn how to engage in critical reflection', 'Take part in group problem-solving', 'Use clips from movies or extracts from fiction to explore teaching', and 'Try doing something different'. May be useful for teacher trainers as well.

Language Assessment for Classroom Teachers. L. Bachman & B. Dabock. (2017). Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-19-421839-9, 289pp+, ca. 90% of A4. The authors state that so far as they know this book presents "an entirely new way of looking at the way you assess your students" in that "you begin by first asking yourself what beneficial consequences you want to bring about by using an assessment" (p.2). Key terms from some of the chapters are: *overview, consequences, decisions, interpretations, record, assessment task templates, creating assessment tasks, combining tasks, administrative procedures, instructions, scoring, and reporting*. At the end of the book there are, among other things, (a) nine examples of assessments that cover, altogether, each of the four skills, (b) a checklist, (c) a glossary, and (d) suggestions for further reading. Most teachers will need to know what's in this book.

Towards the creative teaching of English. M. Melville, L., Langenheim, L. Spaventa, & M. Rinvoluceri. (1980/2018). Routledge. ISBN 978-0-8153-7264-6, 94pp, ca. 80% of A4, hardback. This reprint by a new publisher presents 34 communicative language learning activities in four chapters: English through drama (11 activities), Roleplay (16), Music (3), and Teacherless tasks (4). Explicit assumptions are: "Language learning is whole person learning" (p.11); "The content of language lessons should be the student" (p.12); and "The teacher should learn to withdraw creatively to give more space to the students" (p.12). Thus, the overall approach is 'humanistic'. For intermediate and advanced learners.



Teaching on a Shoestring: An A-Z of everyday objects to enthuse and engage children and extend learning in the early years. R. Grigg & H. Lewis. (2018). Crown House. ISBN 978-178583307-6, 204pp. In their introduction to this excellent (!!) book the authors remark that one survey of 2000 parents of small children found that at Christmas time nearly half the children prefer to play not with the toys they got but with the boxes the toys came in. This observation leads on to what the back cover blurb aptly describes as an exploration of "the educational value of 26 inexpensive, readily available resources from apples to ice cubes to zebra patterned fabric and shows how they can be exploited to develop in young learners the four skills widely regarded as essential in the 21st century: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity". Highly recommended.

Better Behaviour: A Guide for Teachers. J. O'Brien. (2018). Sage. ISBN 978-1-5264-2973-5, 169pp. The chapters of this useful, very readable book are: *Why understanding behaviour matters*, *How psychology can help your understanding*, *Your behavior*, *Rules & expectations*, *Motivation & rewards*, *sanctions & punishments*, *Restorative approaches to preventing & resolving*



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conflict, *Working in partnership with parents, Special educational needs & behavior, and Fostering your own style*. A key theme is "how your behavior influences their behavior". The author, who is the behaviour columnist for the *Times Educational Supplement*, has a blog: jarlathobrien.wordpress.com.

ELT Lesson Observation and Feedback.

J. Barsdell (2018). Self-published. ISBN 978-1-983308000, 125pp, ca. 80% of A4. There are ten chapters about: Types of lesson observation, Formal observation, Decoding lesson plans, Feedback on lesson plans, Assessing teaching practice (TP), Feedback on TP, Written feedback, Face to face feedback, Alternative ways to manage oral feedback, and Alternative ways to observe a lesson. There are eleven photocopiable items (checklists and forms). There are no references or (so far as I can see) allusions to already published works on observation and feedback so it is not obvious how, or whether, this book is intended to offer something not offered by other treatments of the subject. The print in some of the tables is very tiny. However, the main text is very easy to read (e.g., smoothly written; good-sized print) and there is much sound advice.

The Decisive Element. *G Toward, M Malton, & C Henley. (2018). Crown House. ISBN 978-1-78583312-0, 147pp+.* Here, the 'decisive element' is the teacher. The idea is that a teacher 'makes the weather' in a classroom, which can be sunshine or wind and rain. In gist, the authors argue for a praise-focused way of teaching. Somewhat UK referenced. An easy-to-read, anecdotal presentation of tips and rationales. The back cover blurb calls the book a manifesto.

Teaching and Learning the English Language: A Problem Solving Approach.

R. Badger. (2018). Bloomsbury. ISBN 978-1-4742-9042-5, 282pp+, ca. 80% of A4. Primarily for teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) Although it is ambitious to cover teaching and language in one book, in outline this one has a simple enough plan: *The Fundamentals* (language & language learning), *Teaching Knowledge & Skill* (teaching, programme & lesson planning, evaluation & assessment), *The*

Language Elements (pronunciation, spelling grammar, vocabulary, discourse); *Language Skills* (reading, writing, listening, speaking), and *Conclusion* (professional development). That said, it touches on a very wide range of topics so many that the list of references includes approximately 500 books and articles (and there are, by my count, 34 figures and 74 tables). Evidently for use in connection with a MA programme. Associated resources are available at www.bloomsbury.com/cw/teachingand-learning-the-english-language/

Reflective Language Teaching: Practical Applications for TESOL Teachers, 2nd edition.

T. Farrell. (2018). Bloomsbury. ISBN 978-1-350-02134-1, 283pp+. The chapters are: *Reflective language teaching; Self-reflection; Teacher beliefs & practices; Teacher narrative; Teacher metaphors & maxims; Classroom communication; Reflecting on teaching young learners; Action research; Teaching journals; Teacher development groups; Classroom observations; Collegial friendships; Concept mapping; Online reflection; Professional development through reflective practice; and The importance of reflective practice for effective teaching.* This edition has the same basic structure as the much-praised 2008 original. Changes include new and updated case studies and three new chapters. Perhaps the standard introduction to reflective practice in TESOL.

The Learning Power Approach: Teaching Learners to Teach Themselves.

G. Claxton. (2018). Crown House. ISBN 978-178583245-1, 228pp+. The author is a cognitive scientist with a long background as a researcher of learning. The book has 11 chapters which are not easily summed up in a short title. As an example, chapter eight presents 14 design principles for a Learning Power Approach; among them are: *Create a feeling of safety; Distinguish between learning mode & performance mode; Organize compelling things to learn; Make ample time for collaboration and conversation; Create challenge; Make difficulty adjustable; Show the innards of learning; Make use of protocols, templates, & routines; and Use the environment.* Interesting, informative, readable. Recommended!

Becoming a High Expectation Teacher: Raising the Bar. *C. Rubie-Davies. (2015). Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-71337-5, 254pp+.* The author details the beliefs and practices of teachers who have high expectations of all of their students, and presents an evidence-based argument that 'high expectation' teachers can raise student achievement. Key topics are: teacher beliefs and expectations, formation of teacher expectations, grouping students heterogeneously rather than by ability, goal setting, enhancing class climate, and sustaining high expectations. Not specifically about language teaching.

Learning to Teach Foreign Languages in the Secondary School: A Companion to School Experience, 4th edn.

N. Pachler, M. Evans, A. Redondo, & L. Fisher. (2014). Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-68996-0, 411pp+.incl. 22+pp. of references. Key topics are: insights from research, teaching methods, learning strategies, a good learning environment, the transition from primary to secondary school, digital technologies, teaching in L2, the receptive and productive skills, teaching and learning grammar, planning and reflecting, learner differences, and assessment. There are tasks for the trainee/reader – e.g., "Ask your subject mentor whether you can shadow her for a whole teaching day... 1. In the course of the day list all her duties and responsibilities, note the time of occurrence and duration. 2. Then discuss with your mentor how representative her day was and which other responsibilities and duties she has on a regular basis". UK referenced, thorough, sensible, clearly written, and altogether recommendable. It should be borne in mind, however, the UK school system is recurrently subjected to 'reforms', meaning that it is possible that some comments about the UK system may soon or already be out of date.

Language Learning Beyond the Classroom.

D. Nunan & J. Richards, eds. (2015). Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-71315-3, 302pp+. This is a practice-oriented collection of 28 chapters (by about three dozen authors) in the following sections: 'Involving the learner in out-of-class learning' (Extensive reading, Listening logs, Vocabulary, Songs and lyrics, Pronunciation, and Dialogue

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journals); 'Using technology & the internet' (Vocabulary, Digital games, Social media, Social networks, Language exchange websites, and Tandem e-mail); Learning through television (The language of the Pokemon, Television series, Internet television, and Extensive viewing); 'Out-of-class projects' (For accuracy, Learning to learn through technology, Integrating classroom learning and autonomous learning, Real-world experiences in sustainability, and A digital video project in science); 'Interacting with native-speakers' (Language and cultural encounters, Study abroad programme design, Talking to strangers, Study abroad, Creating opportunities for out of class learning, and Learning with a home tutor). Perhaps of special interest is an as yet unmentioned chapter in the final section: 'Linking language inside and outside the classroom: Perspectives from Teacher Education' by M. Grau and M. Legutke. Recommended on account of its breadth.

Research Methods in Educational Leadership & Management, 3rd edn. A. Briggs, M. Coleman, & M. Morrison, eds. (2012) Sage. ISBN 978-1-4462-0044-5; 432pp+. More advanced than the book noted just above, this one comprises 26 chapters by 32 contributors. Besides the introduction, the parts and chapters are as follows: *A: The Concept of Research* (Understanding methodology; Taking a critical stance; The role of culture in interpreting & conducting research; Reviewing educational literature; Reliability, Validity, & Triangulation; The ethical framework); *B: Approaches* (Research design; Mixed methods research; Surveys & sampling; Case studies; Practitioner research; Grounded theory research; Ethnography; Narrative & life history; The learner voice); *C: Research Tools* (Interviews; Developing & using questionnaires; Making use of existing data; Documentary analysis; Discourse analysis; Using diaries & blogs); *D: Analysing & Presenting Data* (Quantitative analysis [QA] using SPSS, Advanced QA; Qualitative analysis using NVivo; Academic writing). Authoritative; looks to be an invaluable overview & handbook.

Making Learning Happen: A Guide for Post-compulsory Education, 3rd edn. P. Race. (2014). Sage. ISBN 978-1-4462-8596-1, 290pp+. Topics include assessment, feedback, learning, and teaching. The chapters include one on lectures and one on learning in small groups. On the back cover

of this evidently popular book we find the following, "In the age of digital communication, online learning, and MOOCs, teachers and lecturers need to be able to offer even more to their students". And on page 2, "The approach I am using in this book is to leave aside the questionable thinking about learning styles and theories of learning and probe much deeper into the factors that affect *all* learning". Informative and practical. No particular focus on language teaching. There is useful coverage of observation of teaching and peer observation.

Focus on Assessment. E. E. Jang. (2014). Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-19-400083-3, 198pp+. The goal is to help teachers understand research evidence in the context of assessment of 6-16 year-olds with respect to an additional language. The chapters are on: Uses of language assessment, useful theories of language development (commendably, Chomsky's theories are not mentioned), principles for assessing young learners, principles for assessing adolescents, and learning from research. The ample end material includes suggestions for further reading and a glossary. The scope is fairly international. Suitable reading for people at MA level. The main text is set in easy-to-read print. A small number of ancillary texts are set against a background of excessively dark grey.

Creating Motivation: Activities to Make Learning Happen. C. Pugliese. (2017) Helbling Languages. ISBN 978-3-99045508-1, 139pp, A4. This book, which is in the publisher's series of teacher's resource books, presents "practical, ready-to-use activities" in three sections devoted, respectively, to activities designed (1) to promote feelings of belonging to the group, (2) to foster concentration and focus on the here and now, and (3) to stimulate and surprise learners and challenge them to think. The introduction offers a rationale for activities that have these aims. It also elaborates on the premise that "it is unthinkable trying to keep the students motivated without using a methodology that is original and imaginative, in other words: creative". The author suggests five essential features of a creative activity (i.e., one that stimulates creativity in the learners) – for instance, it is unconventional, credible, and causes surprise. He also offers a "manifesto for creativity in language teaching" that includes 21 points. The 21st is in fact the premise of the book: "Creative

teachers are rewarded by their students' enhanced motivation to learn" (p.17).

Teaching Lexically: Principles and Practice. H. Dellar & A. Walkley. (2016) Delta. ISBN 978-1-909783-22-5, 152pp. Partly, this book is a concise, practice-oriented update of the Lexical Approach that includes dozens of suggested techniques and activities. The useful introduction argues that (1) grammar and vocabulary are both learned best when they are taught in combination; (2) context is "absolutely" central; (3) lessons must be input-rich. The section devoted to techniques and activities has these parts: Teaching vocabulary lexically, Teaching grammar lexically, Teaching reading lexically, Teaching listening lexically, Teaching writing lexically, and Recycling and revising. The authors do rather downplay the considerable extent to which single- and multi-word vocabulary items can be learned *out* of context. Recommendable, nevertheless.

Enhancing Teaching Practice in Higher Education. H. Pokorny & D. Warren, eds. (2016) Sage. ISBN 978-1-4462-0285-2. 232pp. Besides an ample introduction by the editors, there are ten chapters by 16 contributors most of whom are based at universities in London. The chapters are: Course and learning design & evaluation, Teaching by leading & managing learning environments, Assessment for learning, Blended learning, Embracing student diversity, Engaging with academic writing & discourse, Effective supervision, Work-related & professional learning, and Professional development. Not limited to language teacher training. Relevant to teaching in different settings such as classrooms, laboratories, and studios, and in different contexts such as lectures, small groups, and supervision of students' research. Would be a good read for keeping up to date.

Leadership for Tomorrow: Beyond the School Improvement Horizon. M. Groves, A. Hobbs, & J. West-Burnham. (2017). Crown House, ISBN 978-178583-237-6, 182pp. This book relates most directly to schools in England, and a key theme is school leadership. Part 1, 'The case for change', presents guiding propositions emphasizing the importance of equity, the personal needs of learners, learning rooted in authentic social relationships, and collaborative school leadership. The remainder of the book outlines the prevailing state of affairs, challenges, goals, and 'leading oneself'.

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