



PROFESSIONAL ELT MAGAZINE ONLINE



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A. INTERVIEWS FROM *TESOL TURKEY 2ND INTERNATIONAL ELT CONFERENCE*

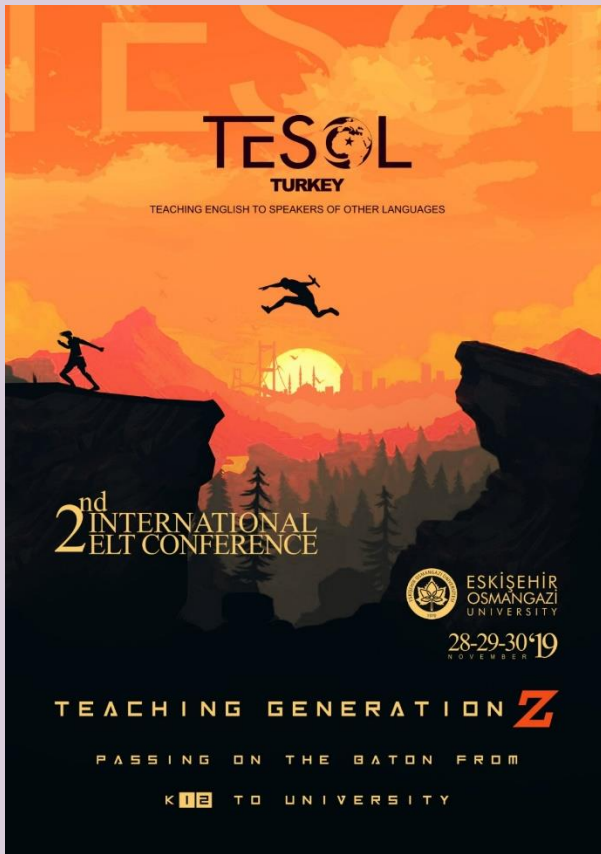
Here is the video after the event! We asked the questions below to the participants during the conference and now it is time to enjoy the interviews!

Interview questions:

“What are your expectations of your colleagues teaching at university level? In your opinion, what might they do differently or continue to do to build on the foundation that you lay?”

We would like to thank everyone for making this possible!

You can watch the interviews by clicking on the link or the video image or by simply scanning the QR Code below:



<https://bit.ly/35J5llR>

B. ELT RELATED REFLECTIONS



Georgia Georgogianni has been teaching English for more than 13 years in various teaching contexts in Greece and the UK both in the private and public sector. She holds a BA in English Language and Literature and an M.Ed in TESOL. She is also TEFL certified. Her main interests lie in assessment, teaching with technology and finding new, engaging ways for language learning. She also has a strong interest in online teaching.

THE FUTURE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

BY GEORGIA GEORGOGIANNI

This is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable eras in human societies. We live in a digitally literate world full of information abundance and a great technological disruption where the number of people who are learning a foreign language online has grown considerably over the last years. The shift from traditional in-person classes to online classes is gaining place as we are moving closer to a twenty-four-hour society where the digital world has given us great flexibility. There are definitely a few reasons for this shift. The biggest reason is that people are more comfortable using technology nowadays and they are so hooked on being mobile. Learning at any time of day or night seems to be the new trend. Learners feel more confident to practice the language they learn in a relaxed environment from the comfort of their own living room sofa without the need to commute and spend money and time. Another reason is the explosion of educational mobile apps and interactive software which have given access to language learning to all people no matter where they live and what their financial status is. Learning a language is not a privilege to the elite any more. It is an affordable way even for the less privileged ones with better learning experience. Immersive technology has become the new way to absorb content nowadays in an engaging and funny way. The learner is provided with a number of resources to use, support and further their learning, track their progress and after all be responsible for their own learning at their own pace. Even feedback can be instant. More than anything else, though, is the flexibility of online language classes. Learners can schedule their class at their own convenience, reschedule and learn from a variety of locations in a natural and progressive way.

What about teachers? Are they prepared for this shift in this digitally literate world? It is true that teachers need to learn new skills and equally unlearn old habits. We should keep in mind that in order to be successful, we must leave our comfort zone and reinvent ourselves. Having in our disposal a number of tools compared to the traditional textbooks, we can give learners the chance to unlock their potentials and shift our perspective from “teachers” to “guides”. The focus of teaching is placed on personalised learning to serve the needs of the world’s students and expose them to a wide range of skills in order to thrive in a globalised world. We must sweep away old habits and shift from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset in order to progress. We need to collaborate with that new mindset and not compete with artificial intelligence. According to Kurzweil, by 2045, our brains will be connected to the cloud and we will be able to “Google” any knowledge we need and download it to our brains. The same will happen with foreign languages. . We will be able to store knowledge directly to the cloud and access it any time.

Beyond these benefits and the new growth mindset that is an essential tool, it is worth noting that the world is moving towards online examinations for many reasons quite similar to those of online learning. It is obvious that the means of education are expanded far and wide to our fingertips.

In the long-term, online learning can change the way we see education as a whole transforming it to a self-driven experience enjoyed by everyone because as Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher once said: “There is nothing permanent except change”.



Deniz Şalli-Çopur is a teacher educator in the Department of Foreign Language Education at Middle East Technical University. Here, she has been teaching Methodology and Practicum courses. Her areas of interest are pre-service teacher education, and program evaluation.

DOES A LAW OF ECONOMICS APPLY TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS?

BY DENİZ ŞALLI-ÇOPUR

Gresham's Law "bad money drives out good" is a monetary principle in economics, and this principle dates back to 16th century Elizabethan England. As *Encyclopaedia Britannica* explains, "If coins containing metal of different value have the same value as legal tender, the coins composed of the cheaper metal [i.e.: copper or nickel] will be used for payment, while those made of more expensive metal [i.e.: silver or gold] will be hoarded or exported and thus tend to disappear from circulation". To make it more simple, if you have two 10-dollar bills in your pocket, you pay with the one looking dirty and old, and keep the one that looks new and clean. So the "bad" money drives out the "good" money from circulation and the former gets worse in the market, while the latter stays in your pocket.

On a hot July Sunday, I found myself in Middle East Technical University's Kemal Kurdaş Hall listening to one of our professors, Adil Oran, from the Department of Business Administration. He started his presentation thanking the audience for being there on time, shared some uncomfortable anecdotes on Turks being late to business meetings, and referred to the Gresham's Law. He, using an attention-grabbing tone of voice and gestures, told how this monetary law applies to our students in the university. To summarize his words, assume that we have two groups of students in a class. One group comes to class always on time, while the other one always comes late. When the teachers/ instructors/ professors do not take action against those latecomers, they keep on joining class late, and some of the on-time comers eventually start being late as well. So the late students [bad money] drives out the on-time students [good money] from classroom [circulation].

His way of making an analogy between a monetary principle and a student behavior made me think about other student behaviors that we experience in our classes: The "bad" students (who sleep at the back of the classroom, who constantly use Turkish to ask questions, who play with their mobiles, who refuse to read the course material before/after class, who disturb others,

and so on and so forth) drive out the “good” students who participate, who take notes, who try to speak in English, who read the class material, etc. So with peer pressure and/or teacher’s ignorance, the “bad” students drive out the “good” ones from circulation in our classes.

Gresham’s Law may also apply to teacher behavior. All most all teachers, of any subject matter, may complain about the system, curriculum, materials, assessment procedures, workload, administration, rules and regulations, student attitude, parents, and anything and everything related to teaching. The “bad” teachers use such complaints as an excuse not to do their job properly. The “good” teachers, on the other hand, may also complain about those problems, but they try to find a way to solve them and/or to do their best in their context. However, it is not easy to stay as a “good” teacher. Attrition is very common among teachers in some parts of the world such as North America or Australia, and especially the novice ones leave the profession and follow other careers. Yet, changing careers is not easy in some countries like Turkey. Instead of leaving the profession physically, teachers may stay in the system, but they psychologically leave being a “good” teacher and fighting against the things they complain about or start using them as an excuse not to be “better”. Apparently, something should be done in our system of education to reverse this monetary principle.

Most countries have a national/central bank in charge of exchanging the old paper bills with the new ones. The system, in other words, pulls out the “bad” money for having more “good” money in circulation. Fortunately, students and teachers are different from paper bills; they may renew themselves or help each other to renew. Every teacher may go through ups and downs in his/her career cycle but still has the potential to reboot. Even the “bad” teachers that we categorize with a judgmental eye may show their best when they are given the opportunity to develop and enjoy the profession. Needless to say, teachers have a “snowball effect” on students, educational systems and society. The impact of a single teacher may create an avalanche, and with effective professional guidance and support, they may be the creators of a generation or an educational culture. Thus, the administrations, in particular of institutions, and the Ministry of National Education, in general, should pull the “bad” out of circulation and provide professional development opportunities to help teachers find the “good” in themselves.

References: Gresham’s Law. (n.d.) *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Retrieved November 19, 2019, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Greshams-law>



Ayşe Zambak graduated from Hacettepe University, ELT Department in 2008. Since then, she has been working as an English teacher for MONE. She completed her MA in 2016 at Çağ University, and now she is a PhD student at Çukurova University. Currently, she is working at Research and Development department of Sarıçam District Directorate of National Education. Her interest areas include discourse analysis, teacher education, in-service teacher training and professional development.

IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING: PUTTING A BRICK ON THE WALL FOR CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY AYŞE ZAMBAK

Along with the developing technologies and innovations, the need of continuous professional development for teachers is increasing every year. It is crucial for teachers to improve themselves both personally and professionally in order to keep up with recent changes in the field of language teaching. By prioritizing teachers' CPD, it becomes clear that a new route has been determined by Ministry of National Education with the introduction of Turkey's 2023 Vision of Education on October 23rd, 2018. In line with this purpose, an important key word comes to the fore: in-service teacher training.

In-service teacher training means all education and training activities engaged in by secondary and primary school teachers and principals, following their initial professional certification, and intended mainly or exclusively to improve their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes in order that they can educate children more effectively (Bolam, 1982, p. 3). On the other hand, in-service training of teachers contributes to their professional development, which is one of the important field competencies of English teachers working for MONE. With this aim, one of the commonly accepted definitions of CPD by Day (1999) is as follows: Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. (p. 4). As can be understood from the definition, in-service education is mainly intended to improve teachers' professional skills and thus the quality of education. The ultimate aim of both the concepts of CPD and in-service education may look similar; however, CPD is a longer-term process which requires teachers individually or collaboratively to take any actions for updating their knowledge, skills and thoughts. Therefore, it is seen much more like a voluntary lifelong learning process being a part of teachers' lives.

When the field competencies of English teachers of MONE are considered, continuing professional development constitutes a basis for ensuring sustainability in the development of professional skills (MONE, 2017b). This area includes teachers' practices for professional development to support English language teaching process. To illustrate, EFL teachers need to identify professional competencies, ensure their personal and professional development for teaching English, use scientific research methods and techniques for professional development and reflect on their practices. Even so, it is possible to say that teachers are complaining about the lack of opportunities to take part in in-service teacher training sessions, which are in English at all. Especially, after the of introduction of Turkey's 2023 Vision of Education, the issues about teachers' CPD have been addressed under the title of Development and Management of Human Resources in the report, and three vital targets regarding foreign language teaching have been released. According to Target 3 focusing on improving teacher qualifications and competencies for English language teaching, some actions have been planned to reach at these targets as follows:



Action 1: Carrying out online, offline and face-to-face master's degree, international certification, themed certificates and similar training activities for all foreign language teachers in three years' time with the support of international organizations, higher education institutions and NGOs

Action 2: Giving online and face-to face trainings to foreign language teachers in line with the philosophy of Lifelong Learning, and giving the opportunity to work with teachers

who are native speakers of English.

Action 3: Providing opportunities for teachers to use digital sources in addition to full knowledge of field methodology.

Action 4: Sending teachers and trainers to foreign teacher training certificate programs in summer.

As local reflections, I planned to organize a workshop consisting of 30 English teachers on November 22nd, 2019. The first part was about direct effect of giving instructions on learning, which was a session given by Nazlı Çalışkan from Çağ University, and the second

part included a presentation by Bob Nguyen, USA Fellow at Çukurova University titled as 'How to engage students in digital classrooms?' That was the first time when teachers working for MONE participated in a workshop organized by the District Directorate of National Education completely in English language. Despite its being the first step, teachers filled in a questionnaire to give us idea about the content of next sessions. In the end, smiling faces of teachers gave me the strength and courage to design other sessions in the near future.



Overall, it can be definitely said that the content, planning, organization and timetable of the trainings should be based on teachers' ideas ensuring equality in every corner of our country. In addition, District National Education Directorates need to take necessary responsibility to initiate these in-service teachers training sessions. More importantly, English teachers should be autonomous and

willing to pave their ways for their own professional development.

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C. TROUBLE SHOOTING/CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS



Fatih Kurtoğlu is an EFL teacher working for the Ministry of Education at Sivas Science High School. Between 1997 and 2001, he was lucky enough to study in METU and graduate as a language teacher. He has started his teaching career in Sivas, his hometown, which is a peaceful city ornamented by historical sites in the central Anatolia.

WHAT CAN I DO?

BY FATİH KURTOĞLU

What we have in today's schools where the education takes place could be a good start to discuss the issue of the ways to contribute to the quality of teaching English in Turkey. The curriculum and materials are supplied by the Ministry of Education for all K12 levels for free which is similar to most European countries and the USA. The main difference is that the local board of teachers decide on the curriculum, course books and any extra materials, so teachers take all the responsibility of the process in these developed countries. Most classes in Turkey are equipped with modern smart boards, have free access to censored web connection, which is commonly used to enrich the courses with digital, modern and authentic materials.

One of the major obstacles for ELT teachers at high schools is the University Entrance Exams, in which foreign language part (English) is not compulsory. It is not easy to make the students be interested in English courses as the majority of students will have an exam of science or social science according to which their career is shaped. The success of schools is determined by the ranking of the students at the university entrance exams, in which, unfortunately, English has no priority. The common idea of the students is that they can deal with foreign languages later at university.

Here comes the question; in spite of all these negative factors and potential barriers “what can I do?” as a language teacher. For sure, teachers’ professional experience, critical thinking and problem solving skills are improving because of the living conditions in Turkey, where things can change so rapidly. Therefore, there is no doubt that everyone has his own right answers but I want to share my answer to this crucial question.

International projects and exchange programs can be used as a perfect tool to keep the students’ interest on track. They would have a chance to improve their skills not only in

English but also to get ready for professional and social life. They would learn several skills in a practical way as problem solving, critical thinking, forming social relations, being self-confident and several more depending on the scope of the project.

To illustrate, “Discovering Our Cultures” was an international Erasmus+ project in which schools from Turkey, Spain and Sweden worked with between 2013 -2015. Students had a great opportunity to know more about other cultures, traditions, and customs, and to share their own cultural background. They were able to do it thanks to their ability to use the English language. Students realized the necessity to know a foreign language to be able to communicate with peers.

Another important factor that directly affects the motivation of students is to have active, well trained, up-to-date teachers with prominent leadership skills. In the fall semester of 2019 for two months, I had the priceless opportunity to join the teacher training program in Boone, NC, USA by the Fulbright scholarship of Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA). This experience convinced me that the perception of teaching and pedagogical approaches need to be changed and reorganized.

Learning for teachers is necessary to be life-guides for students and not to be isolated from modern teaching tendencies, developing and changing world. Teachers should be well trained, confident and of course happy people to make an effect. It is important to be taken as a model by students. Students must accept a teacher as a leader and the right person to follow. If a teacher fails to be a good leader, they can never be successful at teaching.

The era of passive learning is out of date. It is an era of collaboration, learning together, even teaching outdoors. The idea of teaching is not to give all the academic knowledge to students but to explain how to use them in real life as practical skills are the most precious part of education.

The center of the educational process is a child, who should be treated in a respectful, friendly and caring manner. Students should feel that they are valuable for their families, teachers and country, and they, in return, will be able to contribute a lot to society, to commonwealth, and respect others. We should motivate and support students even if their results are even far away from being successful.

Unfortunately, schools are old fashioned models of a social institute, not contemporary but the students are just the opposite - modern, developing, demanding, eager

to learn. A teacher is a linking element between educational material and students. Each subject has its “teacher’s face”.

Every country has its own values and dynamics, so taking a certain successful education system as a model doesn't always work. Every country should develop policies in harmony with its own dynamics and values. Moreover, what is decided on should be followed with consistency!

I want to finalize my words with the quotation by Rumi, which I luckily encountered in the entrance of a local shop on King Street of Boone, NC; “Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself”. The quotation by Rumi indicates that changes in our educational system will not happen in a moment. We, as teachers, should not wait for this transformation to be given by the government. It is our responsibility to start to change educational reality step by step.



Deniz Özbeyli teaches English at Yaşar University. He worked as an Instructor of English in the army until 2014. He earned his B.A. in English Linguistics at Hacettepe University; M.A. in ELT and PhD in History at Dokuz Eylül University; M.A. in Human Resources Management and Development at Marmara University. Özbeyli finished the Advanced Language Proficiency Skills Course at Defense Language Institute in Texas and took Managerial Communications classes at Wayland University in U.S.A. He is into many topics from ELT workshops to juggling. He has a YouTube channel and he has more than 100 short stories, essays, and travel notes published in literature and art magazines.

MICRO FEEDBACK IN CLASSROOMS

BY DENİZ ÖZBEYLİ

Most teachers of foreign languages or those who have administrative roles in foreign language teaching institutions have divided language learning process into some particular components. These components usually include the curriculum, the teacher, the learners, the material and so forth. One can add various other items into this list, however, the crucial and magic time in language learning is the period when learners and teachers interact with each other. Although learning takes place in the learner's own educational perception and capacity, the indispensable and valuable interaction in classrooms forms the body of the foreign language learning activities. In the dynamic and interactive atmosphere of foreign language learning process, feedback plays an important role. If exams are the way to assess the level and amount of learning, then, feedback is the way to make sure if all the efforts are going to the right place.

In this paper, we are focusing on a concept, which I will name “**micro feedback**” process. In language teaching classes, setting goals and trying to achieve those goals in a particular period is good. What is better is setting manageable and doable goals and finishing each task with the feeling of success and finalizing the process. Giving feedback is meaningful. However, when the feedback session becomes very long or if it is given long after the assessment takes place, it usually ends up with the loss of interest and attention; therefore, the best way and the most fruitful method is to do the feedback process as quickly as possible right after the test or teaching activity. The teacher should also keep the feedback period and material at minimum. Dividing the feedback topics into bite-sized amounts always makes the activity more meaningful. To illustrate, giving a vocabulary feedback should be limited to 5-6 words maximum at all levels. Likewise, regardless of the learners' levels, feedback on pronunciation should be focusing on 1-2 points only. Some teachers tend to include teaching/feedback material more than what learners could really and easily acquire when they provide feedback to their students. I've stated this sentence as the words and observation of an

experienced instructor of English at various levels in a variety of age groups for a long time. A teacher may see some long periods allocated for feedback useful and “sweet” at first, but the reality is that learners first seem to show interest, and they note down that excessive load of feedback items, which, they plan to take a look at a later time, but do only a little, in fact. When the particular amount of feedback (which naturally may vary from learner to learner, but the teacher would be expected to guess the learners’ capacity and interest, though) is exceeded, it may be difficult for learners to acquire the material provided in the post-teaching/assessment process.

Another important point is the fact that the feedback activities are much more effective when they include fun. It is also important that all feedback should be done in a constructive way. This makes the learners feel comfortable and open to learning. One of the three major principles of The Natural Approach, one of the ELT approaches by Stephen Krashen, is lowering the affective filter. This principle is that the activities done in the classroom must foster a lowering of the affective filter of the students.¹ Low anxiety level, good rapport with the teacher, friendly relationship with other students will contribute to the learning environment a lot. Considering that a feedback session usually takes place after some tests and realizing that these tests might have caused some feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration for some students, establishing a friendly atmosphere gains importance. Also, the concentration period of the students will be shorter than usual times. This is another factor that brings out the importance of micro feedback.

Micro feedback should also be used for the students who perform well. In a writing exam or a speaking exam/interview, some of the students may show an outstanding success. Knowing these students have performed well, a teacher may praise the student by “patting them on the back”. However, using microfeedback and eliciting the outstanding points will encourage students to improve and excel themselves. Besides, this kind of micro feedback including appraisal will motivate some of the other students, too.

While micro feedback is mostly associated with the students taking the feedback, it should also be considered teacherwise. To give an example, in speaking lessons/interviews the students/interviewees also get an impression of the examiner. This impression may include the teacher’s voice tone, vocabulary, body language and so on. Students’ impression is a meaningful source to get an idea about the teacher-student interaction period during a speaking exam/interview. At this point, for practical purposes, due to the nature of microfeedback and

¹ Krashen, D. Stephen, Terrell, D. Tracy, *The Natural Approach*, Alimany Press, Hayward California, 1983, pp. 20-21.

to raise consciousness on both (the students and teachers) sides, students' shortly marking a list of "the happy or not smileys" after the speaking exams could be a good idea.

To conclude, micro feedback is an applicable, easy to do and pleasurable activity as it gives the feeling of success and improvement to both the learner and the teacher. It is a very beneficial process in foreign language teaching and assessment activities due to its realistic and meaningful nature.



Anže Perne teaches English at Gimnazija Vič in Ljubljana, Slovenia. He has been the coordinator of several European projects (especially Erasmus+) at his school and has attended numerous teacher professional development courses abroad. In his teaching, he especially focuses on ICT and culture.

AUTHENTIC TOPICAL TEXTS FOR ADVANCED SECONDARY LEARNERS

BY ANŽE PERNE

The best way to start this article seems to be the following question: *What is authenticity?* This perpetual question has been the subject of numerous debates, articles, studies, etc., all trying to answer it. This article will not presume to give you an exact answer, but will merely present my view on the matter. It seems to me that all the texts on this topic have one thing in common – authenticity is a matter of interpretation. Tatsuki (2006) argues that it is a social construct and that it is through our social use of language that we create our own sense of authenticity. This seems reasonable, but there should be some basic framework as to what it actually is. If we did not have something like that, interpretations might vary (too) greatly.

Authentic material or authentic text is usually the code word for material not produced for teaching purposes. If you are convinced by that, it may open even more questions, e.g. Is it better to have a fully authentic text (i.e. non-adapted, written by a native speaker) or an authentic activity? It almost goes without saying that authentic materials can be used in an inauthentic manner. My view on this is that there should be a proper balance between authentic activities and materials. Another question to answer is whether authentic means real-life. The latter is a facet of authenticity. Chavez (1998), however, argues that any text that has been taken out of its original context and away from its intended audience ipso facto becomes inauthentic, thus even the “realia” that we import into the classroom is inauthentic. If we were to completely agree with Chavez, it would imply that everything we do in our classrooms is inauthentic. But then again, we could argue that this claim does not hold water since what we understand as “real” is often experienced through the mediation of language, so in this sense we can deal with authentic texts and tasks. Tatsuki (2006) sums it up nicely: “We cannot and do not experience reality ‘raw’ – much of our experience of reality is mediated by language.” For the purposes of

this article, let us therefore assume that an authentic text is one written (possibly translated into English) by a native speaker, non-adapted for learning purposes, using “real” English (i.e. not using obsolete vocabulary, using genuine collocations and other idiomatic expressions – something that our learners will be able to use when using English in real life).



The present article describes a reading activity my students are involved in. I see it as an authentic one and it provides an opportunity for grading, which is not often the case with very authentic tasks. The reasons for reading can be divided into two broad categories: instrumental and pleasurable. Most of my students see reading as instrumental – it will help them achieve an aim (to learn something they are required to, to help them get a good mark, etc.). There is no doubt that instrumental reading can be pleasurable to a certain extent, but my goal with the activity we call *Media Analysis – Articles* is for (most) them to read for pleasure and not see this task as something they have to do to get a mark. The latter is quite simply their reward for reading and then discussing the text with their teacher.

At the beginning of the school year, the students are given access to a special e-classroom, where articles will be uploaded. These articles are topical, hence they cannot be uploaded at the beginning of the year and they are selected every week. The articles are uploaded into sets of four. The students are given a list with their names, corresponding sets, and the dates for the oral assessment. They are required to read the articles and prepare for the discussion/assessment by filling in a template they can download in the e-classroom.

Here is an example:

Date:	<u>11 February 2019</u>
Theme of article:	<u>Body dysmorphic disorder</u>
Headline:	<u>Faking it: how selfie dysmorphia is driving people to seek surgery</u>
Author:	<u>Elle Hunt</u>
Source:	<u>The Guardian</u>
Date written:	<u>23 January 2019</u>
Summary of text:	<p>The article is about filtered images that are triggering body dysmorphic disorder known as BDD. This is a health condition where people become fixated on imagined defects in their appearance. In the article there are shared opinions of different cosmetic doctors that say that this is caused by all the social websites, such as Instagram and other apps, on which you can make your face look flawless. They say that in the past, people brought in pictures of celebrities, and now they are coming with pictures of themselves, taken with snapchat filters or with other similar apps. For example, they want the tear trough removal or taut jawlines. In the article there are stories of different young people, who had problems with BDD. They mostly had these problems because they were bullied at school or were not confident with their looks. *</p>
Most interesting fact:	<p>you can get your nose fixed with fillers within your lunchbreak. The distance from which we take selfies matters.</p>
Did you like the style of the article?	<p>The article is written understandably, not using difficult phrases, even though it includes medical view of the problem.</p>
New Vocabulary: (Any additional words/phrases can be written on the back of this page)	
<u>Dysmorphia</u>	<u>a condition in which someone falsely believes that there is something seriously wrong with their appearance</u>
<u>prevalent</u>	<u>existing very commonly</u>
<u>reckon</u>	<u>to think or believe</u>
<u>defects</u>	<u>a physical condition in which something is wrong with a part of someone's body</u>

The students are encouraged *not* to memorise what they have written down, but to say what they remember about the text. I typically ask them some follow-up questions and discuss some of the vocabulary items with them. Here I encourage them not to provide dictionary-type definitions (even if they used a dictionary when preparing for the assessment), but to explain the items using their own words or to use them in example sentences. They are then marked based on the descriptors for this specific oral assessment (preparation, vocabulary, pronunciation, engagement in conversation, grammar). They are not assessed on

the content as it is not problematic if their views on an aspect of the text differ from mine, but that does not mean they can digress. Should this happens, I intervene and shift the discussion into the original direction. In this way, the content also matters.

80-90 % of the students enjoy this activity as it means they read authentic texts. As most of them are advanced students (B2-C1), they typically find coursebook texts uninteresting. By designing such an activity, I have successfully motivated them to read and to enjoy English classes even more. By exposing the students to such texts, I have moved away from the “traditional” coursebook texts and made their English classes more authentic. The activity does, of course, require more time compared to simply following the coursebook texts, but I firmly believe authenticity in language is something all EFL teachers should (try to) strive for, making it a core part of their EFL teaching.

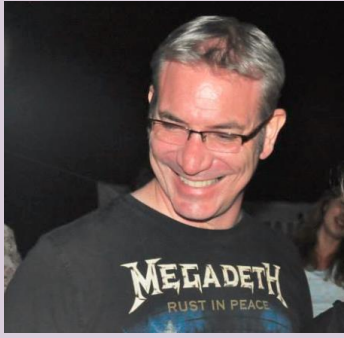
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After 20 years of living and working as an English teacher at universities in Istanbul, Adam Simpson now does volunteer work with refugees and immigrants in the Netherlands.

A THREE-STEP GUIDE TO WRITING EFFECTIVE LESSON OBJECTIVES

BY ADAM SIMPSON

Objectives are among the most important things to have as a teacher. They act as a guide for both you and your learners and without them, you will both be lost.

Not only do they enable you to focus your teaching on a specific goal, they also help your students understand why they are learning. What's more, clearly written objectives let you decide how to assess learning, because they necessitate that learners demonstrate what they have learned. If you have unambiguous teaching objectives, you will make more productive use of your time in class. These are the three steps that I use and recommend you follow, too.

Clarification: Is it an aim or an objective?

Aims are general statements about what you wish to achieve, whereas objectives are specific, measurable targets. In layman's terms, aims are the goals you set, while objectives are the actions you take to achieve these goals.

Step one: think

Carefully consider your institution's curriculum

Generally speaking, your objectives should always relate to your curriculum. If not, it will be hard to justify why you are doing this, both to learners and to your superiors. Exceptions might be, for example, when you have to review and give extra practice in a particular language point to a class that has just moved up a level and need it.

How are you going to base your objective on your curriculum? First and foremost, you need to review the material you will be teaching to see how you can relate it to the curriculum. Often you'll find that the material has been chosen with the curriculum in mind, so half of the job has already been done for you. The best place to find 'inspiration' is in the teacher's book of

whichever material you are using, as these usually tell you exactly why the materials have been designed and with what purpose in mind.

Break the work down into small steps

If what you think you want to do is ‘*Compare the use of the simple past and present perfect with adverbial time phrases,*’ then your learners will first have to be able to know about those tenses and the associated time phrases. This may involve teaching them about the form of the tenses, their auxiliary verbs, the second and third forms of the verb and also the type of adverbial time phrases used with each. Fortunately, your textbook is probably following a linear progression of grammar points, and so already does this. If you feel that your course materials don’t break it down enough, you can always turn to supplemental materials.

Step two: take action

‘Learners will be able to . . .’

What will they be able to do? I think this phrase is a must at the beginning of any objective. Your objective is aimed at ‘*permitting*’ learners to express what they know, and therefore should be a reflection of this.

Use verbs that express actions, not feelings

Bloom’s taxonomy works well as a list of verbs for describing the many ways in which learners can demonstrate knowledge. Consider these examples of what I mean by action verbs: ‘*analyze,*’ ‘*compare*’ ‘*list,*’ and ‘*evaluate.*’ Decide what type of action you want learners to be able to do and describe it accordingly. Try and avoid wishy-washy verbs like ‘*understand*’ because, let’s face it, this is hard to measure in an objective.

List everything in simple steps

Ok, so now we have the ‘*learners will be able to...*’ followed by an action verb. We need to finish the sentence with specific, simple language that explains everything your learners will do. Remember, you should make this simple enough that your learners will be able to understand. Rather than “Learners will be able to ascertain certain fundamental subtleties of the present perfect aspect,” try “Learners will be able to identify the differences between the use ‘for’ and ‘since’ with the present perfect aspect.”

Step three: in class

This is easy to forget but it really is the whole point of the task: share your objective with your learners! The act of physically writing your objective on the board will let your learners know what you expect them to learn. They will appreciate this as much as you.

Following up

In step two I mentioned Bloom's taxonomy as a source of inspiration. In the next issue of the TESOL Turkey magazine we will look at this framework in more detail and think about how it might help us develop meaningful and actionable objectives.

D. ARTICLE REVIEW



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REFLECTION ON ‘LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION POLICY PROMOTING LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION’ BY GERARD WILLEMS

BY SEHER BALBAY

The significance of the intercultural component of the language classroom is undeniable. The study published as a part of a project that intends to publish guides for the development of Language Education Policies in Europe to promote linguistic diversity in education, *‘Language teacher education policy promoting linguistic diversity and intercultural communication’* by Gerard Willems, focuses on the inter-cultural dimension of language teacher education. Today, English language teachers are well aware of the fact that cross-cultural problems are a key challenge to language teaching, and especially language teachers must be spending effort to promote linguistic diversity in the globalizing world of 21st century. In this context, Willems was inspired to undertake an analysis of language policies; highlighting the importance of context in language teaching, and teacher education. The paper is a practical source of reference in that it provides the reader with a variety of classroom applications in which cultural gaps are intended to be filled with tasks that agree with the principles of the Council of Europe. The paper covers the cultural issues that we are likely to encounter in the language classroom, and suggests solutions, for which I am grateful since it is not uncommon to read research that portrays problems without immediate practical classroom solutions for teachers. This is one major reason why I believe further research of this nature would be welcome pleasantly in the ELT field by practicing teachers.

Willems in his article suggests a ‘collective creativity’ in designing cultural exchange tasks, and refers to the significance of tolerance to enable world peace, so, in a sense, he suggests that language teachers have a critical role; enabling and facilitating a tolerant environment for learning inter-culturally. In fact, in his conclusion, Willems does give this responsibility to language teachers. I find that the fundamental value and the enabling role

assigned to language teachers in the article is a realistic one, and is guiding language teachers to be more ‘accepting’ and approachable about cultural issues in their mixed group classes.

Another important aspect Willems refers to is the difficulty language barriers cause. He gives an example of the European parliament, where during translation the meaning of a proposal is lost and parliamentarians mistakenly end up voting for something they were opposed to. Before I read this I would naturally have assumed that only professional translators who are competent in considering inter-cultural aspects of language worked in the European parliament, and that their professionalism was least likely to be a cause of misunderstandings. However, with this example, Willems helps us to understand the primacy of culture in the formation of language barriers even in professionals with advanced levels of language proficiency.

I would like to emphasize that Willem’s summary of what to focus on when training teachers is very effectively compact. He expresses that in teacher training the following has to come into the foreground: knowledge of the other cultures, a deep, understanding and open-minded, nonjudgmental attitude towards other cultures or an intrinsically motivated will to do develop such an insight.

I do however disagree with Willem’s statement about culture’s being unchangeable, fixed. I had never thought of ‘culture’ as a coded program, to the contrary, for me, ‘culture’ is a constantly changing phenomenon even at individual level. With more mobilization for business, education and entertainment reasons, especially in modern times with more digital technology to connect us to both macro and micro cultures of even overseas continents, countries, nations and relatively small scale local communities with distinct life styles and perceptions of worldly phenomena, recognizably differing values from that of what we are familiar with, culture has become a more dynamic and liquid concept to define within the constraints of physical borders or rituals or practices of ethnic or religious roots without diving into the dangerous risk stereotyping.

Another aspect I perceived to be rather startling was the outdated communication means mentioned in the article, recommending snail-mail as a medium to develop intercultural competence, while teachers today, needless to say, can deploy emerging technologies in language teacher education that lend themselves to more spontaneous interactive communication, in the process of developing cultural exchanges to enhance a deeper understanding of ‘the other’.

Overall, the study is a comprehensive one that encompasses the diverse cultural factors immersed in second language classes. It is an effective and easy to follow and understand guide for the practicing language teacher who aims to value plurilingualism that

provides the associated cultural and political contextual relationship links to the language classroom practices.

TESOL

TURKEY

TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES