

New Members' Social – 19 June 2010

In with the new

We've gained nigh on 50 new members since last August. It was time to invite them for a drink and chat, and also find out what they hope to get out of MELTA.

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The (mis)adventures of Lucy Chapman

We have to use the term 'new' rather loosely in this context, because some of the people we invited to the Park Café that Saturday afternoon had already joined rather a long time ago. Nevertheless, my motto is 'the more the merrier', and so it was that we had a fine turnout that cold, wet day.

Chatting in a group was not on the cards, however, on account of the World Cup football. The Park Café is a popular place to watch matches, and although it wasn't overrun with people that afternoon, there were at least 3 TVs in use simultaneously.

So what do you do when you can't address everyone at once? Well, it meant going around and explaining the 'Speed-dating game' several times over. This game is a great way of getting into contact with a lot of people individually in a short time, but of course in this case it has nothing to do with dating. Once left alone, committee members and 'new' members alike struck up a flurry of conversations. While this was going on, I was comparing the real people with their photos on our Ning. There wasn't a stripy deckchair in sight!

I should mention at this point that only a small percentage of people responded to the invitation, which is a shame; and some replied that they would be working, which just goes to show that a teacher's job often knows no weekends.

You may be interested to know some of the things that the participants wrote down when asked what they would like to get out of MELTA. Here they are in no particular order:

- an introduction to international English dialects
- the opportunity to meet and get to know other English teachers
- information about new resources
- seminars relevant to work
- the occasional social event
- a one-to-one workshop
- help with professional survival, and some basic tips on the website
- work opportunities and to know which are the good schools to work for
- personal development in teaching, techniques and classroom management
- networking with other teachers
- professional development



(L-R) John Sydes, Rod Zook, Susan Körber, Yvonne Schmidt, Kate Eden (at front), Catherine Finn, Claire Conroy, Vivienne Arnold, Dennis Lamb, Steph Shellabear, Sarah Boye, Justyna Freudenthal, Marianela Silenzi, Elena Mendoza

Continued on page 2

From the Chair

MELTA – making the most of it

Well sunny days are here again – at least the bad weather gave our students lots of chance to learn some new rain metaphors, besides, of course, it's raining bats and frogs, I mean hats and hogs or should it be gnats and logs?? There's always some additional fun that can be pulled from a depressing situation, thanks goodness. And when you're an English football supporter, you have to look on the bright side. Whether it's doing some comparatives with *Top Trumps* English footballers – Wayne Rooney is significantly more attractive than Steve Gerrard (or should that be the other way round?) – or describing the technology needed for chip inserts in footballs, you have to make the most of the situation you're in. And funnily enough, that's just what MELTA did after an unfortunate workshop cancellation in June (for which I once again apologise). We had a room reserved at the Gasteig for the follow-up to the cancelled Professional Development course – and quite organically, the idea arose of running a Mac Us-

ers workshop. And very successful it was too. See the videos that Rod has uploaded to the MELTA Forum Ning.

And we can make the most of a *good* situation, too. We're pleased that once again we are going to offer tickets to the Oktoberfest on Sunday 3 October. According to the latest gossip this will be first smoke-free Oktoberfest ever (despite the official concession). More information on page 3.

Don't forget to keep an eye on what's happening on the Ning (and if you're still represented as a deckchair, then please upload a picture of your lovely self). If you're reading *MELTA News* as a PDF, I hope you're enjoying the experience!

Have a great summer and I look forward to seeing you at the workshops in the autumn!

Vivienne Arnold, MELTA Chair

Continued from page 1

What was particularly welcome was the praise for what MELTA does. The anonymous responses also contained compliments about our Ning site, stated that MELTA does a good job and that such gatherings as this one are appreciated.

The committee members will take all of this on board and, inci-

dentally, are working hard at getting workshops together on the topics closest to your (and our) hearts at this present time. We would also like to thank the providers of the positive feedback.

Steph Shellabear

Impressum

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MELTA mission statement

MELTA is a regional professional association for all teachers of English working in the Munich area: freelance teachers at companies, private schools and the *Volkshochschule* as well as state school teachers. Established In 1989, MELTA is part of a wider network of English teachers' organisations throughout Europe and has especially close ties to other English Language Teachers Associations (ELTAs) in Germany. MELTA is also affiliated to the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL).

MELTA provides a forum for information and experience exchange, training and teacher development and social contact and support. MELTA's activities include presentations by leading EFL/ESL guest speakers and practical workshops and demonstrations.

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Visit MELTA at www.melta.de

You'll find the MELTA Ning discussion forum at:
<http://melta-forum.ning.com>

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From the Editor

On board

I've been having a lot of fun (and a few frustrations) going hands on with the layouting of this issue. After Andi White's enjoyable, generous and informative talk on GRUNDTVIG applications I'm beginning to wonder if I shouldn't apply for EU funding to get to grips with the layouting software, but in the meantime I am very thankful to Joe Butler for stepping into to do much of the work and tutor me in my first lark in layouting.

We are a little less Ning-centric in comparison to the last issue, but you will see several 'teasers' in the newsletter to give you a taste of some of the activity on the new MELTA forum if you haven't signed in for yourself yet. It really is becoming the user-friendly, active forum MELTA has always needed.

The ShopTalk books and resources workshop brought a flurry of reviews - those that haven't found space this time round will be printed in upcoming issues.

Finally, thanks to everyone for their contributions - especially those from our newer members - it's great to you have you on board!

Kate Eden, MELTA News Editor

Oktoberfest alert!

After last year's very enjoyable lazy Sunday afternoon at the Oktoberfest, we have once again reserved two tables for MELTA members.

Prices have not yet been finalised by the breweries, but are likely to be €30 per person for Hähnchen and 2 very large beers.

Watch out on the website and an email shot if you would like to join us this year. Numbers strictly limited; first come first served!

From the Membership Secretary

Bottomed out

I'd like to extend a big welcome this season to our new members Jody Larimer, David Casey, Claire Conroy, Scott Dougherty, Denise Wade, Justyna Freudenthal, Ulrike Massonet, Alice Muirden, Jennifer Knight, Silke Riegler, Breda Howe-Helmecke, Tracy Wickens, Donald Watson, Bryan Lockwood, Nathan Azize and Jack Adoni.

We have unfortunately also lost a number of members since the last issue of *MELTA News*, some of them because they have retired from teaching and/or moved away from Munich, but the majority sent us their wish to terminate their membership just after the Treasurer's email went out about membership fees being due.

I'd therefore like to draw members' attention to our Articles of Association which deal, among other things, with the required notice for terminating membership: it can be found under the section 'About Us' on the MELTA website at http://www.melta.de/aboutus_MAOA.php and there's a link at the bottom right hand corner of the Ning screen too .

The number of sign-ups has calmed somewhat compared with the frenzy of late of 2009 and the beginning of this year, but we have a very healthy number of members which enables the committee to organize so many interesting and worthwhile events. Enjoy the summer!

Stephanie Shellabear

Teething trouble?

We know a few members have had problems getting onto the Ning. If you have not received your email invitation, have binned it by mistake or have had problems registering, DO drop an email to info@melta.de and Steph will endeavour to get you back on track.

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MELTA Exam & Language Proficiency Day on 15 May

BEC? KET? BULATS??!! What??

If you've ever wondered what all of these various Cambridge acronyms are all about, this was the workshop for you. Dennis Lamb does his best to summarize.

On May 15th, a fair number of people decided to escape tourists in favor of taking part in an informative workshop presented by the dynamic duo of Sarah Boye and Emma Jones. The aim of the workshop was to introduce the range of Cambridge exams by looking at how the exams correspond to the CEF levels, comparing them to other English exams offered, and taking a look at the on-line teacher support offered.

The first Cambridge exam was given in 1913, and up to now there are over 300 million candidates who take the various exams each year. For this reason, knowing about the exams offered and being able to aptly prepare students for the exams are marketable skills for English teachers looking to enhance their status.

The workshop principally focused on the range of Cambridge exams which can be split into two families (general and professional English) as well as two types of exam (certificate and assessment test).

The assessment tests give an accurate picture of the student's current English skills and are available for each family of exams. Such tests may be used by academic institutions, work programs and for immigration purposes. IELTS (the International English Language Testing system) has Academic and General Training Versions, while BULATS is of interest to employers, reflecting the Business English skills of their workers.

As for the tests themselves, all of the certificate exams consist of reading, writing, speaking, and listening sections. The FCE, CAE, and CPE all have the added bonus of a 'Use of English' section, which tests the students ability to transform thoughts using basic English into more natural sounding colloquial English.

Once the nuts and bolts of all the exams were covered, we broke into groups to get some hands on experience with actual past exams (which

are available to students and teachers for practice purposes). Each group was given two exams to compare and contrast, and most groups received tests that were in comparable CEF levels to make it easier to see the differences and similarities. However one group received the KET and the CPE to compare the vast amount of progress a learner must go through to get from one end of the spectrum to the other. In the end, most groups reported that the exams were very appropriate for their target CEF level, and that the BEC exams were general (in a positive sense) in their business focus.

it seems quite
odd to speak to
someone who ...
doesn't react to
your answers

We then went on to try our hands at the oral examination process. In the oral exams there are two examiners (the interlocutor and the examiner) with two to three students. The interlocutor has the interesting and difficult task of asking questions, not reacting in an approving or disapproving way, and making sure that all students answer necessary questions – all while keeping to a strict time schedule. In the role of a student, it seems quite odd to speak to someone who asks moderately personal questions, doesn't react to your answers, and cuts you off if you talk for too long. In the role of the interlocutor, you have to suppress all desire to realistically react to what is said, and keep to a specific script. The script is supplied by Cambridge as a measure to keep the exams con-

sistent and fair. Despite the potentially strange environment, it does support equal opportunities for all students. When preparing students for such exams this may be a good thing to warn students of.

To finish up, we did some internet research looking at other international tests offered that compare with the Cambridge exams, and exploring the teacher support pages offered by Cambridge. Within a few minutes of googling you can find an endless stream of information to help you on your way to becoming a Cambridge exam expert.

All in all, it was a very informative morning in good company at the Gasteig. Despite the gargantuan task of passing on all of the above information, Sarah and Emma took their time and presented everything in an understandable and applicable way.

Dennis Lamb

Certificate Exam Suites

General English

- Key English Test (KET, A2)
- Preliminary English Test (PET, B1)
- First Certificate in English (FCE, B2)
- Cert. in Advanced English (CAE, C1)
- Cert. of Proficiency in English (CPE, C2).

General Professional English

- BEC Preliminary (B1)
- BEC Higher (B2)
- BEC Vantage (C1)

Two specialist field exams,
both at B2-C1 level

- International Legal English Certificate (ILEC)
- International Certificate in Financial English (ICFE)

MELTA Exam & Language Proficiency Day on 15 May

As simple as ABC

A packed morning programme was followed by an equally enlightening afternoon session on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

The CEFR was drawn up in 2001 by the 47-member Council of Europe, responding to a clear need for transparency in the contents and goals of language teaching. It classifies our levels of linguistic ability in the four skills into a catalogue of ‘can-do’s’ ranging from the simplest ‘fluency levels’ (A1 – Young learners, or Breakthrough), through A2 (Hauptschulabschluss, or Waystage) and B1 (Realschulabschluss, which roughly equates to BEC Preliminary or Threshold) and on up to the more sophisticated ‘accuracy levels’ (B2 – approximating to the advanced school-leaving exam level, or Vantage, C1 – equating to effective or proficient use and finally C2 – the mastery level associated with skilled technical negotiators or IHK-qualified translators and higher, such as the Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom, which is needed to teach in German schools).

transparent,
concrete,
goal-oriented
descriptors

Myriam Fischer Callus from Bavaria’s third-largest VHS in Aschaffenburg filled three hours with simple, demonstrative and stimulating pairs and group exercises and report-back discussions, supported by telling anecdotes and supplies of free chocolate. Essentially, she helped us discard aimless claims like ‘I know the past tense’ in favour of transparent, concrete, goal-oriented descriptors like ‘I can write a postcard / I can describe what happened on my holiday / I can comment usefully on what happened at yesterday’s meeting.’ The reference work you want for this is the ‘CEFR: Languages, Teaching and Assessment,’ published in Eng-

lish by Cambridge University Press (ISBN 0521 005320) and by Langenscheidt-Verlag in German (ISBN 3468 494696), or you can google the Council of Europe for more details. This so-called ‘Blue Bible’ lists around 400 anchor descriptors. Ms Callus compared these levels of competence to the development of a human being’s coordination and strength – looking up, crawling, standing, running, doing a marathon and doing acrobatics.

She reminded us that a learner’s four skills can, of course, be at varying levels, and that more and more employers are specifying what level of which skill they expect from job candidates. Similarly, course book authors, syllabus planners and examinations syndicates all now need to adhere to this remarkably clear contents framework.

moving into an age of lifelong learning

Certainly, the Council of Europe assumes we are living in or moving into an age of lifelong learning, where everybody must be able to contend in their native language and in two further languages, with the A1-C2 scheme naturally also embracing ‘non-school’ language acquisition, such that it has become easier to grant recognizable accreditation to these non-formal abilities and informally-acquired everyday skills. The scheme helps a student to gauge autonomously their own progress or levels, record in a concrete list what they have practised and mastered, and thus more effectively define what they still want to be able to do in each of their four skills.

Placement tests for in-company courses and at adult education establishments can then of course become more transparent and realistic. Course-choice counselling must also

change. The multiple-choice grammar quizzes of yore are giving way to newly-devised questionnaires along the lines of (a) What can you do?, (b) What do you want to be able to do? and (c) What form of course would you prefer, for whatever reason?

Comparing Earl Stevik, who once remarked, ‘You list it, you forget it,’ with Tony Buzan and Rebecca Oxford’s work on mindmaps, Ms Callus illustrated the way in which ‘can-do-oriented’ links between ideas are both more memorable and more useful. Making extensive use of activities drawn from the Next learners’ series, she gave us a clear insight into what she and her collaborators are especially hoping to achieve in the field of testing. She is working on a ‘Sprachenportfolio,’ a mission aimed at all of Europe and intended to ensure that the A1-C2 system is incorporated into all examinations. The Association of Language Testers in Europe, or ALTE, is supported by Cambridge ESOL, Perugia University, the Instituto Cervantes and a host of other top exam syndicates across Europe in its efforts to integrate national examinations into the A1-C2 system, encourage them to adapt their contents accordingly, and to develop and provide its own examinations on each of the six levels and in each of the four skills. Noticeably, the Mittlere Reife now has an oral element, for example.

More information on what we heard can be obtained online from the *Bayerischer VHS-Verband*. I can only say that, afterwards, we were all pretty convinced that ‘success comes in cans.’

Bill Soutter

European Certificate in Language Teaching to Adults

EUROLTA

Myriam Fischer-Callus sheds light on another training avenue for modern languages teachers in adult education.

Many teachers of languages engaged in the field of adult education across Europe look for opportunities to advance in their profession. They often do not have the possibility to gain certification for the tasks they are fulfilling. The ICC International Language Network (a not-for-profit organisation) has developed a framework for teacher development with training schemes that lead to certification. EUROLTA (European Certificate in Language Teaching to Adults) is an internationally recognised qualification for those who wish to teach modern languages to adults.

The Teacher Training Framework

The EUROLTA Teacher Training Framework defines objectives, aims and procedures for teacher training as well as assessment criteria for certification. It sets minimum standards for quality teacher training for language teachers and the ICC is responsible for maintaining these standards through the accreditation of courses and the monitoring of assessment procedures leading to certification. The BVV (the Bavarian VHS umbrella organization for institutions in adult education) is a certificated EUROLTA centre and has been offering EUROLTA courses since 2005.

The EUROLTA Teacher Training Framework allows for various forms of delivery of the training programmes according to different regional traditions, contexts and conditions. The scheme is flexible but the number of hours for the Certificate (a first level of qualification) training programme is set at a minimum of 100. It is open to teachers of ALL languages. The certificate does not attest to any particular level of competence in the language taught. It aims to help trainees become aware of the issues and processes involved in learning a foreign lan-

guage in an adult education context.

The core content areas are:

- Language awareness
- Language and culture
- Language learning processes
- Language teaching
- Planning and evaluation
- Self-assessment

Flexibility

The European institutions participating in this scheme are free to tailor the training scheme to their local context. The BVV has divided the training scheme into two series of modules – a basic training (50 hours) and a follow-up advanced module (50 hours). Participants who have many years of experience can join the second module if they demonstrate that they have covered the required areas.

awareness of issues and processes in foreign language learning

Methodology

The training programme reflects a 'learning by doing' and reflecting approach:

- It is characterised by a cooperative learning style, involving trainees in the planning and shaping of the programme.
- It presents opportunities to extend theoretical knowledge of language, learning and teaching and as well as to evaluate and improve practical skills.
- It integrates practical exercises and the observation of teaching/learning (themselves, their own classes, others, other classes, video sequences) with subsequent analyses.

- It provides opportunities for self evaluation, assessment by peers as well as offer opportunities for self-reflection.

Certification

Throughout the training period trainees work on tasks that will provide evidence that they have reached the certificate level of competence. This evidence is collected in a EUROLTA Qualification Portfolio which will form the basis for the final assessment and for certification.

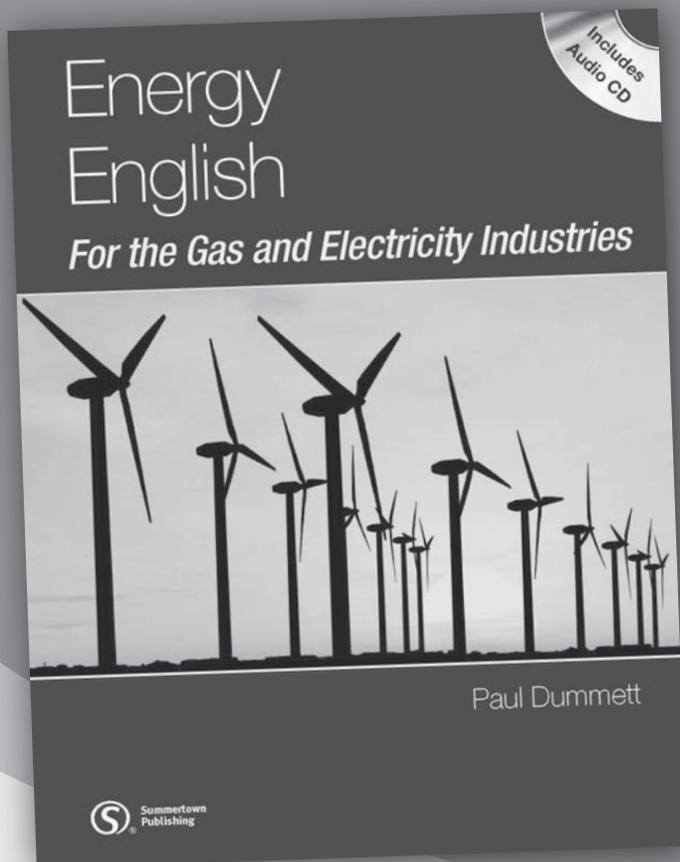
For more information about training dates, courses and fees, please contact:

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Myriam Fischer-Callus

Preparatory Course for the Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) from Cambridge ESOL

The Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) is a flexible and accessible award for teachers of primary, secondary or adult learners or those who would like to teach English but do not yet have a teaching qualification. It is suitable for native and non-native speakers of English. The course and the test cover the following areas: different methodologies for teaching; the language of teaching; using resources; key aspects of lesson planning; classroom management for different needs. There is a pre-test (price included in fee) and a final examination (cost: approx. 120 Euros). If you are interested in preparing for the TKT, please contact Astrid Krake on (0 89) 4 80 06-61 51 or astrid.krake@mvhs.de.



The essential resource for energy professionals

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- Grammar section with practice exercises, answer key and audio script.
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| 978-3-526-51350-6 | € 27.90 |
| 978-3-526-51351-3 | € 30.90 |

IATEFL conference 2010

Broaden your horizons

Rod Zook breaks out of his routine at his first IATEFL conference

One of the things that can easily happen as a teaching professional, either as a freelancer or as a contracted trainer, is that you get caught up in the day-to-day routine of preparing and training and meeting deadlines. Before too long you can't see the forest for the trees. Maybe I'm only speaking autobiographically, but I think that happens quite often.

an antidote to the *Alltag*

If you find yourself in that situation, the annual IATEFL conference is a great antidote; all of a sudden you are surrounded by hundreds of teaching professionals from around the world and you realize how multifaceted teaching English is and can be. Of course, the most immediate remedy is putting IATEFL on your schedule for next spring in Brighton or attending BESIG in Bielefeld in November.

For those who intentionally chose ESL early in their career, the range of resources and possibilities is perhaps routine. For those of us who entered ESL as a second (or third) career direction, it may take a while to get oriented and sometimes re-oriented. Harrogate played a role in that for me. As MELTA's official representative, I tried to take in as much as possible and encountered a professional world that enriched my comparatively narrow day-to-day view of Business English.

The four-day event in April 2010 started at the pre-conference day for 'TAs'. MELTA is an official IATEFL Teachers' Association and one of our committee members was expected to show up for the TA day. The organizers, who are also largely volunteers, had planned a full day of informa-

tion gathering and disseminating, including everything from information on the IATEFL handbook on forming a TA and gathering input for a handbook about maintaining a TA. That will probably benefit MELTA when it appears in early 2011.

We were also offered a range of workshops on topics like sharing tips on organizing workshops and the how-tos of facilitating training in cities geographically removed from the TA's primary location or where transportation isn't easily accessible. Penny Ur from the Israel ELTA, for example, presented how they promote several one-off training sessions or mini-conferences per year in outlying areas.

The main input of the TA day came from Richard John, a business and marketing insider who presented suggestions and guidelines for potential marketing and fundraising initiatives a TA can consider if they face budget shortfalls or need resources for expanding or supporting specific projects. His input was well-received by the TA reps, many of whom came from Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia. IATEFL itself maintains a range of funding and support schemes, which provide assistance for groups and individuals, and Peter Grundy and Simon Fenn unpacked the scholarship program and the Wider Membership Individual Scheme and explained how TAs can access them.

Another major component of the annual IATEFL conference is the workshops and plenary sessions, which seem to be in endless supply. The pre-conference brochure contained thirteen pages of very brief 2 or 3 line workshop descriptions scheduled over the duration of the conference. The temptation was great to just attend workshops pertaining to Business English, but the MELTA Events Coordinator had drawn me to workshops such as Very Young Learners, teaching in Second

Life, facilitating fluency, remedial exam preparation models, etc. I've already begun discussions with some of the best presenters I heard and have followed up tips from others to arrange workshops for MELTA in the coming months.

talent-scouting for future MELTA events

Networking with other trainers, including several from Munich and places like Augsburg and Ingolstadt figured into the mix of the week. Getting to know the broader ELTA scene in Germany and Europe and experiencing the English pub scene on Friday evening were both valuable and curious. I'll let you guess which was which. EFL / ESL or whatever you want to call it is blessed by having a rich community of committed practitioners. Getting to know some of them outside of Munich and beyond Germany can only enrich your teaching and broaden your career – regardless of what stage you're at at the moment. Take the chance, plan for Brighton 2011.

Rod Zook

IATEFL conference 2010

Impressions of IATEFL

Stephanie Shellabear also travelled to Harrogate for this year's IATEFL conference, a meeting of over 1,700 attendees from 113 countries.

I really enjoy conferences, and this must have been the biggest I have ever been to. I love the buzz of people signing in on the first day, and I have to smile when I see scores of delegates all walking around with badges around their necks and bags under their arms full of magazines and other freebies.

The conference programme for IATEFL was a very thick book. It made a lot of sense to decide in advance which sessions to attend. Of course, when I mentioned to my MELTA colleagues the talks I'd chosen, their previous experience of other speakers sometimes made me change my mind and listen to other subjects instead.

The opening plenary session was, naturally, well-attended and featured Tessa Woodward speaking about the professional life cycle of teachers. We were prompted to think about whereabouts we would place ourselves in this life cycle: at the beginning – green, yet enthusiastic, or towards the end – burnt out and thoroughly disenchanted! How do we prevent ourselves reaching the disenchanted stage? What ways are there of remaining motivated and exploiting those years of experience to the full?

After this gentle start to the conference it was a mad dash along the various corridors and up and down stairs to find the room for the next session. Thank goodness for the conference helpers posted on every corner ready to show stray delegates the way. The first talk I had chosen to listen to was by Mark Fletcher on 'The Teacher's Treasure – Top Tips for Loving the Job', a topic he's apparently presented before and well worth attending.

His treasure trove is a compact list of some obvious things (like drink enough water when you're in the classroom to keep the old grey matter working; sleep enough; move around to discharge some energy)

and a little bit of background about the brain and how the short-term and long-term memories absorb new elements of language. There was quite a buzz in the room at the end which put me in the right frame of mind to go off and get the most out of the day.

something to take away and use

One of the most enjoyable talks for me was by the very likeable and humorous Peter Watkins from the University of Portsmouth: 'Making the most of a reading text'. Using a *Guardian* article entitled 'What we really need is a festival to celebrate love's many torments. Bring on Unvalentine's Day', we heard about pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading tasks, plus all the different kinds of activities you can devise to fit into those three categories. These include:

- Prediction activities (based on the title, what's going to happen?)
- Jigsaw activities (cut the text into paragraphs and get the students to arrange the paragraphs back in the right order)
- Analysing genre (informal, formal or a mixture? Why?)

Questions that prompted us to have a discussion were:

- What makes a good reading text for the classroom?
- What reading activities are useful in the classroom?
- How can we teach rather than test reading?
- How is L2 reading different to L1 reading?

Since I tend to read novels and class readers with the groups I teach, this talk provided me with some good ideas to implement immediately.

Another workshop that I was glad I attended was Marjorie Rosenberg's 'Getting English learners to speak'. Marjorie's session was filmed and I discovered later that I'd appeared on the IATEFL live broadcast! Talk about my fifteen minutes of fame. I came away with a couple of activities to use straight away to get my quieter students to speak. For instance, a pair exercise in which student A has to describe a picture or photo so that student B (who is back to back with Student A) can draw it. Student B might have to ask a lot of questions to clarify information. At the end, the students compare pictures and see how well they have spoken and understood each other.

take advantage of internet coverage

The IATEFL programme is full-to-bursting. You can sit in talks, workshops and presentations from 9 am to 9 pm. Nevertheless, I found the whole cost of travelling and attending the conference almost prohibitive, and although I am tempted to go to the 2011 conference in Brighton, I will probably take advantage of the extremely good internet coverage of the event instead.

Stephanie Shellabear

IATEFL conference 2010 workshop review

Text Interpretation: why is yours so different from mine?

Heather Weik-Price reports on a workshop with Lindsay Ellwood.

What do we mean by text? This was the question posed to us by way of introduction to this 45-minute workshop. We found out that images and cartoons are just as much text as written articles and literature.

'Text is something that happens, in the form of talking or writing, listening or reading. When we analyse it, we analyse the product of this process...' (Halliday 1994:311)

Then we were asked: 'What do you understand by culture?'

According to Geertz (1973) this is 'The fabric of meaning in people's lives'.

The point was made that the mental representation and a subconscious immediate reaction are the first responses from a reader when asked to describe something.

We were given the subject 'wedding' to think about and from this came responses such as the church or registry office, the bride and groom, colours and flowers, rings, etc. associated with a wedding. These immediate responses depend very much on our cultural conditioning and experiences of this.

Thus, if there is a text on weddings, the text supplies us with a certain amount of information and we subconsciously provide the 'missing links' from our Member's Resources (MR), i.e. from our social conditioning.

Lindsay Ellwood then gave us the following terms to describe the highly complex network of mental representations:

Schemata – frames – scripts (Fairclough 2001)

In the wedding example:

Schemata: these represent the mental frameworks or patterns; the modes of social behaviour, in this case the concept of a wedding (activity)

Frames: these represent animate beings, inanimate objects or abstract

concepts, in this case the wedding venue (topic)

Scripts: these represent the subjects who are involved in activities and their relationships, in this case the bride and groom, their guests and how they interact with each other. (subjects/relations)

cultural background influences

Research has been done to see how cultural background influences the inferences drawn on a text – a short story – following the realization that members of a writers' group from different language backgrounds interpreted the same texts very differently.

The researchers studied interpretations by L1 (English, N. Irish and Scottish) and L2 groups (Dutch, Spanish and French) of a story about a Jewish mother and child in the Second World War.

They were asked to use a 'think-aloud protocol' to interpret the section of the story given to them. This means they had to respond immediately.

Informants were then asked to fill in a questionnaire about background, language, countries they had lived in, etc, to help see how much of their own knowledge influenced their interpretation of the story.

It was found that the informants who had worked in developing countries understood better the mother wanting to give away her child to a better life.

A nurse identified the child as being malnourished from the section she interpreted.

It was also found that the language competency of the L2 group did not affect the interpretation of

the text too much but only in the fluency of response to the story.

Hands-on session

We were then asked to form small groups of 3-4 and to write down our immediate interpretations of:

- 'For sale: baby shoes, never worn' (Ernest Hemingway)
- And a longer section of a short story by Joyce Carol Oates, 'Politics'

My group comprised a man from Korea, a man from Britain, a woman from Turkey and a fellow English woman. For the first extract the Korean said that the advert seemed unusual because in Korea you would never buy second hand clothes for new babies. The other man interpreted the genre quite rationally as an advert and was surprised when the women thought that something horrid might have happened, such as the baby dying, so that the shoes had to be sold... In plenary more women than men had thought of some tragic, more pessimistic interpretation!

The main message of the workshop was:

When we read something we fill in the gaps using our own knowledge.

We were asked to reflect on what we had learnt from the session and how this might affect our work in the language classroom.

For more information on the investigation, see: <http://iatefl.british-council.org/2010/sessions/>

Heather Weik-Price

Creativity with a small 'c'

Diana Diodati-Konrad reports on a workshop by Margit Szesztay (DELP, ELTE University).

This was a very hands-on workshop in which we explored very simple ways of tapping into students' imaginations to develop their language skills. Why the small 'c'? Margit reminded us that it doesn't take much to infuse our lessons with a bit of creativity. Here are some of the activities from the workshop.

1. Picture Gallery

Pictures were displayed on the wall. We were asked to have a look at the pictures and then stand in front of one of them. Once groups had formed we then introduced ourselves and talked about the picture we had chosen. In this case the activity was used as an ice-breaker. It could also be used to introduce any topic for a session.

2. Portrait

Margit put us into pairs. One of us had to close our eyes while she showed our partners a picture of a person. Our partners took on the identity of the person they had been shown. We interviewed them to get information about their family, job, interests, etc.

This activity could be followed up with a writing task, for example, an article or a diary entry. It could also be used to introduce the character in a story or to do a character analysis.

3. Snapshot

Once again we were put into pairs and one person had to close their eyes while their partners were shown a picture. The picture was a snapshot from a scene from a film. Our partners had to describe the picture in detail. We then had to 'create' the film by working out a storyboard and giving the film a title. Each group presented their film.

An extension activity could be to write the script for a scene and act it out. Alternatively, the students could be asked to write a film review.

4. Quotes

As a consolidation activity, Margit handed envelopes around. Each pair took out a strip of paper with a quote on it. We then discussed how the quote was related to the concept of creativity.

Diana Diodati-Konrad

IATEFL Conference on Ning

Were you unable to attend the **IATEFL Conference in Harrogate** this year? Find out what people said about it and watch videos of the event on the MELTA Ning forum (under 'IATEFL Harrogate 2010 Online').

Visit the MELTA Ning forum at <http://melta-forum.ning.com>



ELTAF CONFERENCE 2010

Saturday, 11 September 2010
09:00 – 18:00

Hochschule Fresenius
Richard Klinger Str 11
65510 Idstein

Accessible by public transport:
Bahnhof Idstein (9 mins walk)
Buses from Wiesbaden
By car: A3 Ffm-Köln exit Idstein

Keynote Speaker: Mark Powell

For more information:

www.elfaf.de

Holidaying with students

Homestays are not just for teenagers

More organisation, higher risks but potentially richer outcomes.
Vivienne Arnold shares her experiences at somebody else's breakfast table.

When you think about homestays, usually the image that comes to mind is of teenage children coming to terms with a set of house rules that are considerably different from their own. Or you remember your own horror of your fourteen-year-old self, stepping over someone else's threshold, the unfamiliar smells making you yearn for home. However, the last three homestays that I have taken part in involved a group of women who were considerably older than teenagers – though some of those adolescent fears were still in evidence.

A few years ago I started an English conversation class at my son's primary school and after a rather shaky start, we established a group of five mothers who were at varying levels of English, but all keen to learn more about the language and

English experience – not a run of the mill hotel stay.

Before we left Munich, we did quite a lot of language preparation, particularly small talk, revising household vocabulary, expressing preferences and opinions, ordering in pubs and cafes, and talking about families and jobs. They also completed a written form about themselves for their host family.

cultural immersion requires tolerance

They had quite a lot of concerns about what the families would be like, and in some way (although I hadn't met any of the host families) they needed reassurance that everything would work out well. It's im-

was the first time she had flown – it was great being able to share her excitement. Then came the thrill of driving (on the left side of the road) and the steadily growing hysteria as we drew closer to Bath. My friend and I had allocated the visitors and guests – it was part of their English preparation to write some information about themselves for their host.

We managed to cram in loads of activities, which all involved one or more of the English hosts. As we were all parents, one of the requests was to visit an English primary school. Eyes nearly popped out of heads as the women saw the amazing art, project work and materials in the school. We chatted to teachers and the children and soaked up the atmosphere. The mood was a million miles away from our school in Neuhausen, where I had once had the temerity to ask if I could see in a classroom, only to be told that it was impossible, as there were children in it. How could England and Germany have such different attitudes to education? We went to a local fete and also to the Beaufort Hunt Show where there was great delight at seeing Prince Charles and Prince William playing polo. (This was indeed the 'fairy-tale' idea of what happens in England on a Sunday afternoon.) One evening we all met at one of the host's houses and ate fish and chips from the local chippie. And another evening a local woman organized a barbecue. On the visit the following year, we took part in a safari supper (starters in one house, main course in another and desert in a third house) – quite an event when there are nearly 70 people moving between twelve or so locations. This culminated on the lawn of the local manor drinking coffee. We were truly part of village life for the few days that we stayed each year.

In comparison to regular visits I have done with my VHS classes

Continued on page 20

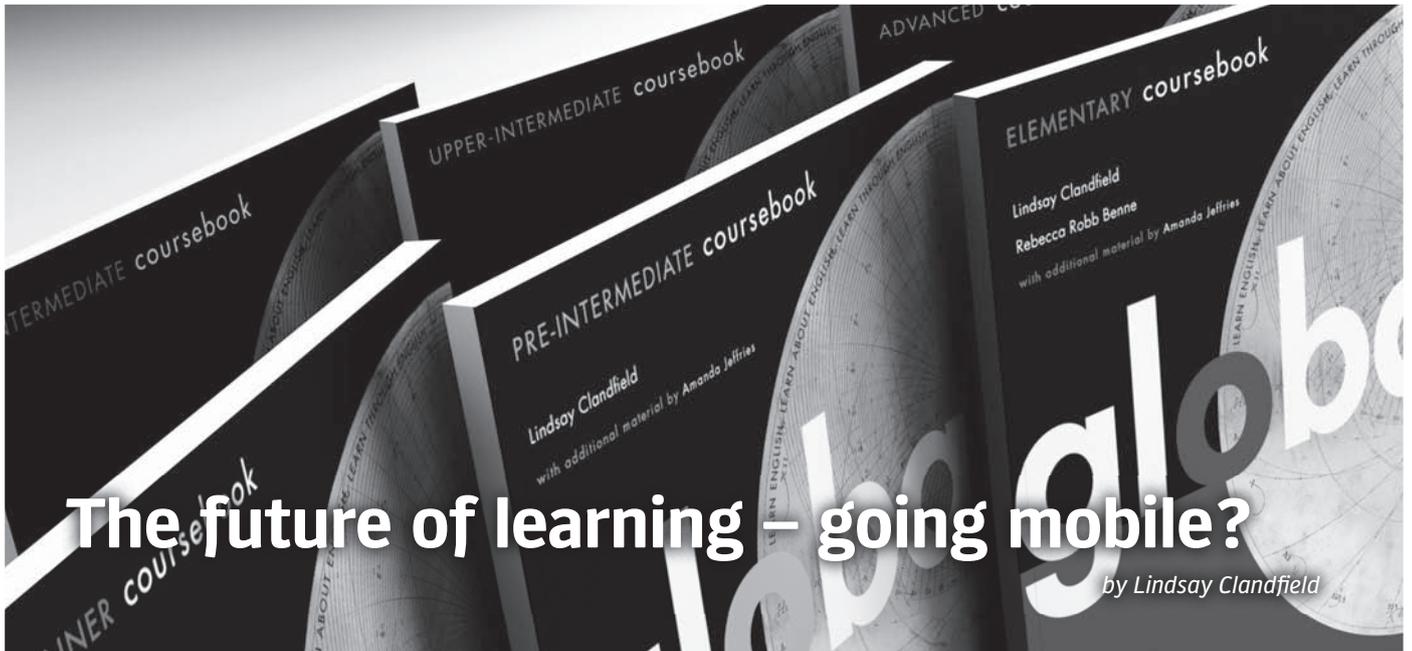


A happy bunch of homestayors with their hosts. Note: this is a **well-dressed** husband on the left.

the country. One of our meetings coincided with a visit from a very good English friend of mine who was keen to encourage the group to visit her village near Bath. She suggested that rather than stay in a hotel she would find families in her village who would host the German women. This would then be a true

important to point out that three of the women were lone parents and took modest holidays – and none of the five had been on holiday without their children before. So this was a big investment, financially and emotionally.

On our first trip, in 2005, there were five of us and we flew to Gatwick. For one of the women, this



The future of learning – going mobile?

by Lindsay Clandfield

As we look forward to a new decade, one of the most important trends emerging in the field of education worldwide is small enough to fit in your pocket but could have enormous implications on how we learn: mobile phone technology.

A 2009 report from Canada's Athabasca University makes the following bold claim: Mobile learning, through the use of mobile technology, will allow citizens of the world to access learning materials and information from anywhere and at anytime. Learners will not have to wait for a certain time to learn or go to a certain place to learn. With mobile learning, learners will be empowered since they can learn whenever and wherever they want.

Will this mean the end of classes as we know them? Of teachers? Perhaps not, but there are signs that a m-learning revolution is underway. The new generations of phones now also offer far more than just a means to communicate with each other; there are hundreds of thousands of mini applications, also called apps, which cater to all kinds of needs from keeping a record of shopping lists to playing games to creating works of art with your photos.

How could this technology be harnessed for the language learner? Here are some potential scenarios, many of which are now possible.

- ▶ Learners subscribe to a service which delivers grammar or vocabulary exercises to their phone every day, and keeps track of their score.
- ▶ For homework, the teacher assigns the learners a short video clip to watch on their phones or computers; the learners can watch as many times as they need to, with or without subtitles. The next day in class the teacher and learners watch the video together and do exercises related to it.
- ▶ Learners have audio recordings of the texts they have studied in class stored on their phone. While they listen, the text appears at the same time on their screen.
- ▶ At the beginning of a new course, learners are given an audio bank of words and phrases that they will be learning during the course. The learners can listen to the vocabulary of the lesson on their way to class, or listen and repeat sets of words as many times as they like.
- ▶ Learners have a series of conversations recorded and stored on their phones; they can listen and practise everyday English.

- ▶ Learners have access to an English dictionary on their phone; they can look up a word or translation any time they need it – and hear the correct pronunciation.

These are only examples, but they serve to show just to what extent language learning can be a flexible activity. Stuck in traffic for an hour on the way home? Review the lesson's vocabulary. Taking the train to work? Why not watch a couple of English videos? Got a test today? You can review the material literally while you walk to class. Teachers have long known that for language learning to be successful, the learner has to devote a lot of time outside class towards that goal. Many of today's learners have an incredibly powerful computing device that they carry around with them right in their pocket. Devoting more time towards that goal has suddenly become a lot easier, and potentially a lot more attractive.

Sources:

Ally, M. Mobile Learning: Transforming the delivery of education and training; Athabasca University Press; e-book <http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120155>
ITU World Telecommunications Database Europe Statistics <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/ict/index.html> Official figures from 2004

Holidaying with students

Where are we going this year?

Ilse Wolfram shares her years of travel guide experience, focusing on the ever popular long weekend in London.

Each year I can hear the above question from my students: Once I started organizing trips to English speaking countries, they could not be stopped anymore. We started with four-day trips to London and have since widened our horizons to include the east coast of America, Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall, the Channel Islands and Malta – travelling independently or as part of a tour.

I have learnt my lesson: never take the cheapest hotels

After thirteen trips to London I have learnt many lessons: never take the cheapest hotels, take the fast Stansted or Gatwick train to town, it is quicker than a shuttle bus to the hotels which stops continuously (and you may be the last one), use buses or the underground wherever possible, take trains for excursions, take sightseeing buses in London with a hop-on, hop-off service to be paid on the buses, book the London Eye and the Houses of Parliament well in advance from Germany, get *fast track* tickets for Madame Tussaud's, London Zoo, London Dungeon, and Tower, either from the driver or London Pride Sightseeing sales staff - or by taking group tickets. It is cheaper to buy tickets for musicals or theatre plays directly at the respective box offices well in advance from Germany – and not from travel agencies. Hotels, however, should be booked at travel agencies. Do not forget to mention that you want quiet, twin-bedded rooms. Try not to arrive late at your hotel and make complaints immediately. (Once a hotel was being renovated and apart from the noise the workers looked in through our windows...) Sometimes upgrad-

ing also helps. It usually pays to get a Visitor Travel Card from your agency when you book the trip.

I have never taken any money for my organisational work and therefore could not be held responsible in case anything did not work. (So far I have never had any problems!) My students nowadays share the preparation work to some extent, trying to find cheap flights and helping by choosing suitable hotels. They are handed out a list of all the sights with opening times. We normally decide at a meeting before the trip who wants to see what. Regarding eating out we usually have at least one good dinner together, but sometimes decide on the spot for a certain pub – depending on the size of the group. Simpson's-in-the-Strand used to be a good restaurant with typical English food – roast beef, 'bubble and squeak' etc., but they are now sort of 'snobbish' (ties obligatory) and very expensive. Be careful with tips! At Simpsons they added a service charge *and* 'voluntary gratuities' of £20 too! At restaurants you do not get separate bills – one person has to pay the bill and the guests may share the amount among themselves. You never give any tips in pubs, but you should collect money for the bus driver of an arranged tour. Taxi drivers sometimes expect 25 per cent.

Dr Ilse Wolfram

What not to miss in London

The Tower of London with crown jewels and Beefeaters, old yacht harbour – St Katharine's Dock – with famous pub *Dickens Inn*, British Museum with mummies and Codex Hammurabi, Old Bailey (no camera allowed, not even in your handbag), London Eye (booking from Germany advised well in advance! Could be combined with a boat's trip with live jazz), Tate Modern, Globe Theatre, Houses of Parliament (to watch a debate booking in advance is recommended – or queuing up is necessary), Westminster Abbey, St Paul's, National Gallery, Victoria and Albert Museum, Buckingham Palace, St James' and Hyde Park, Stock Exchange (visitors gallery), Portobello Road Market (on Saturdays only, antiques), Harrods, millennium walk along the Thames, Covent Garden, Madame Tussaud's wax figures, London Dungeon, Guinness World of Records, *Sherlock Homes* pub, *Prospect of Whitby* (pub with a gallows, at the Thames, U: Wapping Wall) and excursions to: Greenwich from Westminster Pier (Royal Observatory, prime Meridian) with a tunnel walk under the Thames, Hampton Court, Richmond Park, Camden Lock ('Jason's Trip' from Little Venice by boat on Regent's Canal, with a 'Seaman's Basket' for lunch), Reading and Stonehenge, Kew Gardens, Stratford on Avon (Shakespeare), Oxford (lunch in the cathedral!), Windsor (Changing of the Guards, State Apartments, St George's Chapel, Mary's Doll House), walk down to Eton – see King's College first which had been attended by the Royals (guided tours and film) and top it all off with cream tea in a café.

Holidaying with students

Be prepared

advises John Sydes

I've been to the UK several times with students and I can honestly say that some of those trips have been really good fun whilst others were terribly stressful and very hard work.

The trips that I enjoyed most were just that, i.e. 'trips' – the students were more or less the same age as me and we had similar interests so keeping everyone happy was easy. We agreed that there wouldn't be any formal lessons, but that no German could be spoken whilst we were there.

Of course, it's almost impossible to make sure that nobody speaks any German when there are 8-10 of you, but the students were always very careful not to speak German when I was in earshot because the punishment was cooking the next meal and doing the washing up!

I think all the students got something out of those trips, even if there were no formal lessons. Their fluency certainly improved and if we had to make arrangements, such as booking a table at a restaurant or theatre tickets, etc. I made sure that the students took turns at organising things.

trainer-cum-tour guide?

The trips that I found extremely stressful were with one-to-one students, usually senior managers, who wanted formal lessons and taken on sightseeing tours.

For a kick-off, it's not easy to know what materials to take if you don't know the students that well, so you inevitably find yourself taking far too many materials just in case what you're hoping will work, doesn't.

Next comes the problem of finding a hotel which can provide you

with all the facilities you need at a price you can afford because you certainly can't take all the equipment you need (DVD and CD players, TV screens and photocopiers) with you. In some cases, I had to rethink the course I'd offered simply because the company that was paying didn't have a budget for the hardware needed).

Once you have sorted out the equipment and materials side of things, you really ought to think about how you are going to organise your day.

pace yourself

I'd strongly recommend agreeing on a maximum of 4-6 lessons a day. If you try to teach more than that and socialise with your student(s) in the evening, you will soon feel worn out.

The best course I had with a one-to-one student was the last one I gave in the UK.

We met at 8:00 for breakfast and we had conventional lessons until lunchtime (12:30 or 1:00). We then had an hour 'off' to do our own thing. In the afternoon, we went 'sightseeing' together and would chat about this that and the other. Not terribly stressful, but I still used the opportunity to find out which areas of language needed to be taught the following day.

Between 6:00 and 7:00, we had another hour to do our own thing and would then head to whichever restaurant the student had booked a table at. I'm not sure I would recommend asking your students to decide on where to book a table though. The student I was with decided to book a table at the most expensive Indian restaurant in London and whilst the food was good, I didn't enjoy it as much as the last Indian meal I'd had in London (in Brick Lane).

After dining together, we would then end up in a pub or bar, so on a typical day we would probably spend about 14-15 hours together and even if you aren't teaching the whole time, you can never really switch off and relax because you are listening to what your student is saying, correcting their mistakes, making a mental note of some language area that they need more practice with.

My recommendations to anyone thinking of taking students anywhere for an English course would be:

- make sure you know each other relatively well and get on well – if you find you are stuck with a student and your chemistry doesn't work, it could be the longest week or two of your life
- agree on how you are going to spend your time together – and make sure you plan in enough free time for yourself
- get your student(s) to organise what they want to do in their 'free time', but make sure it won't cost them (or you) an arm and a leg
- try to find out exactly what your students needs are – this might help you to cut down on the materials you have to take with you
- make sure all your costs are going to be covered and if you are going to be offering 'proper' lessons that you get paid for them
- finally, don't forget you could be with your students for up to 14 hours every day.

John Sydes

MELTA interview

Go beyond your comfort zone

Andi White gave three workshops for MELTA in July. Helen Strong asked her about her ELT background and interests.

Tell me a little about your ELT background and what brought you to Germany.

We travelled a lot within the US when I was a child because my father was in the Air Force. We lived in many different cities and I think this is where I got my *wanderlust*. Around 16 years ago I came to Europe and was so amazed by the experience that I decided I wanted to stay. I chose Germany because I had contacts with some Germans through work I had done in the US organising concerts for European bands.

ELTAs are a very valuable resource for teachers.

I didn't speak German when I arrived so I attended a language course and this was when I realised that teaching was what I wanted to do. I tutored teenagers for a while, then did my CELTA and got work with a language school. When that contract expired I started teaching German to immigrants. I'd only been living in Germany for four years and this was such a fantastic experience and so different from other teaching environments I'd been involved in. It was a multilingual group of incredibly motivated, sometimes illiterate, students, and the work was badly-paid and very challenging but I loved it. After that I moved back into ELT, did my Diploma and now I'm studying part-time by distance learning for a Masters in Linguistics with St Mary's University College, London. I place enormous value on continuous professional development (CPD) and one of my priorities is to help other teachers, especially those new to teaching, connect with each other and develop their own skills.

I guess your new position as chair of HELTA in Hamburg will help you achieve this goal.

Exactly. I joined HELTA a couple of years ago and started getting actively involved with events and meetings. Then when the post of chair came up in January 2010 I was happy to step in to that role. ELTAs are a very valuable resource for teachers, especially new teachers, and HELTA was the first ELTA in Germany. The committee has restructured this year and our mission is to reach as many teachers as possible in the Hamburg area to connect and exchange ideas by providing a variety of teacher development events, as you do at MELTA.

Which brings us to the workshops you gave for MELTA in July. You selected three topics: learning strategies, making your own interactive whiteboard and applying for



GRUNDTVIG funding. Why these areas?

Although they are very different topics, they are all important in their own ways because all aspects of professional development are important. However, to answer the question, my reasons are:

What I have learned from researching **learning strategies** has made a huge difference in my teaching. I became obsessed with the topic once I started looking into cognitive science and memory research. For example, did you know that learners need to encounter a new word between 7 and 17 times to get it into their long-term memory? And that they also have to experience it in a number of genres and to be able to see it, hear it and say it? The implications for the classroom are that teachers need to present lexis in a number of different ways and to recycle vocabulary on a regular basis. This translates into less work for the teacher and more effective results for learners.

I place enormous value on continuous professional development.

The topic of **make-your-own interactive whiteboards (IW)s** is one which I have also spent a lot of time researching. I first heard it mentioned at the BESIG conference in 2008 and was so taken with it that I researched it and presented it at the BESIG conference in 2009 (much to the chagrin of the big IW publishers trying to market their thousands-of-euros products!). This is an area in which I'm pushing the limits of my technical knowledge but I believe you have to keep up-to-date with how technological developments are impacting ELT and teaching.

And this of course is a further aspect of CPD – daring to go beyond your comfort zone.

Finally, I wanted to present something on **GRUNDTVIG funding**, since a major factor preventing many teachers from investing in CPD is the cost. I'm well aware of the reality of people simply not having the money to take part in training courses. For this reason I want to talk about the European fund which is available to promote such development, and to give teachers tips on how to succeed in the rather complicated process of applying for funding. *(It's a big subject but you can find out more information at www.lebenslanges-lernen.eu/grundtvig_5.html and Andi's presentation will also be posted up on the MELTA Ning.)*

Many teachers simply don't have the money to invest in their own training.

Finally, I'd like to ask you about your experience as online guest presenter at this year's IATEFL conference in Harrogate. How did you get this position and what was it like? I heard that IATEFL were looking for guest presenters and that to apply you should submit a video explaining why you thought you would be a suitable candidate. I came up with an idea for a video, put it together and sent it off. The description stated that you had to be creative and stand out from the rest, so that's what I tried to do. They were obviously impressed because they gave me a telephone interview and I got the job! *(You can*

watch Andi's application video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpvCHxFr_ew)

At Harrogate I was terribly scared as it was all broadcast live so there was no room for mistakes, but at the same time I was very excited. Some of the presenters had had BBC training and there was I just doing the best I could. I expected to be allowed to do one or two interviews but I actually did quite a few. I even got to interview David Crystal! He was a really nice person who put me at ease by giving me a smile and a wink just before we started. Then he thanked me afterwards and said I'd done a good job. It was a tremendous week, the feedback was great and I was thrilled at how many interviews they let me do. I'd really like to do similar interviews at other conferences in the future. *(Andi's IATEFL interviews can be viewed at the Harrogate Online website at <http://iatefl.britishcouncil.org/2010/interviews/all>)*

That was my first IATEFL conference and what surprised me was the high number of delegates from developing countries. It was amazing to hear about their teaching situations as I think we tend to forget about how teaching takes place in other parts of the world. So much of the conference was about technology but so many teachers don't even have books with which to teach. I'd already set up a book scheme for HELTA to send books to poorer areas, but I'd like to see IATEFL setting up such schemes as well.

Thanks very much, Andi, for taking the time to talk to us and for your workshop triple pack for MELTA.

My pleasure.

Andi White spoke to Helen Strong

Look forward to reviews of Andi's workshops in the autumn issue of MELTA News.

Hot discussion topics on Ning

E-mail to class from me:

Please could you let me know if you can make the lesson on Thursday.

Reply from one of the participants:

Dear Mr Sydes

You are the teacher. Why should we make the lesson?

Enjoy more clangers from teachers and students and share your own? Join the **Funny mistakes** group on the MELTA Forum.

Visit the MELTA Ning forum at <http://melta-forum.ning.com>

Teaching around the World

The lure of liquorice

Victoria Adams was the last Teaching Centre Manager at the British Council in Munich before it closed. She has been back in the UK for 2 years now, living in the town that gave its name to Pontefract cakes.

Did it take you long to find your feet?

No, not really, I moved back to Yorkshire, which is not actually my neck of the woods, as I am originally from the North East, but my mum lives here now. It took a little while to get settled, but it really is like being home again!

Where did you teach when you first went back to UK?

I started working in a private language school in York, working mainly as a CELTA and DELTA tutor, but also doing some teaching in the main school and worked there for close to a year. I am now working in an FE college in Leeds teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages and love it. At the same time (I never did like a quiet life) I do DELTA courses in Manchester once a week and at the moment as the FE college is having its long summer break I am in Manchester doing two CELTA courses. A little complicated, I know!

Complicated indeed and are you employed or are you working freelance?

Technically employed...but on an hourly basis. My first job was a full-time contract, but I didn't really like it – too restrictive after years of being my own boss!

Are EFL/ESL teachers well organized, well paid in UK? Well-organised...not really, well-paid...that depends where you are working and on your qualifications. For teaching it is around £12 an hour in private schools, more if you have the DELTA qualification or if you are doing teacher training.

The groups of 12 CELTA trainees at the Münchner Volkshochschule were made up of say 8-9 native speakers and 3-4 non-native speakers. What is the typical make-up of a CELTA group in Manchester?

The typical make-up in Manchester and York is predominantly native speakers – you are lucky if you get one non-native speaker. The age group is also lower than I remember from Munich – a lot of 20-25 year olds.

Are you training EFL teachers who want to work their way round the world or do you get the impression that a lot of them will stay in UK?

The majority of trainees are doing CELTA to 'fund' gap years. Some want to stay in the UK but this is the minority. In the 'getting to know you' stages of the course the most common reason for doing CELTA is 'to travel for a year or so'.

Do you have a typical working week or is every week/month different?

Each month is different. It can be a bit chaotic with some months there being so much work you don't know if you are coming or going and other months being somewhat

quieter depending on which courses are running. Some of the CELTA courses run from 10 am to 8 pm, which is not much fun, but mostly it is nine to five. Only the DELTA course involves regular evening work.

You obviously enjoy working in the UK. Have you taught anywhere else apart from Germany?

Yes I've also worked in Spain, it was my first job after CELTA and I was there for about seven months.

And your colleagues. Where have they taught?

Everywhere! Lots have taught in Asia, and a fair few have worked in Europe.

What do you enjoy about living and working back in UK?

I just love being back in the UK – life feels easier somehow. Specifics? Indian takeaway is high up on the list, people chatting to you when you least expect it and not having to operate on a daily basis in a foreign language. Workwise it was odd at first being located in one place. As a freelancer in Munich you are often zooming all over the city, but now I have got used to it it makes life so much easier. Probably the best thing is having really multi-national groups for CELTA trainees when they are doing teaching practice.

Is there anything you don't like?

No not really...if pushed I would have to say the M62 – I sometimes long for the discipline of German motorways.

Is there anything you and son Marc miss from Germany/Munich?

Marc has fond memories of well-organised playgrounds in Munich and I miss friends and colleagues, of course. I suppose typically German stuff that I miss would have to be *Schweinshaxe* and *Knoedel* and *Kaffee* and *Kuchen*.

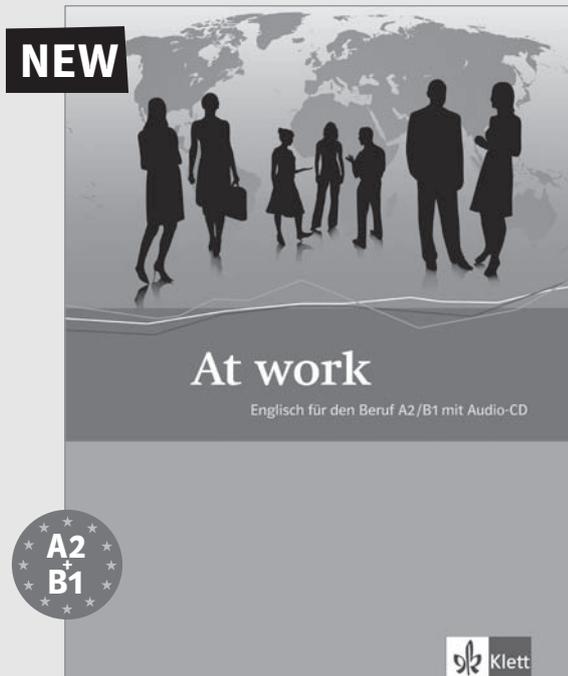
Have there been any cutbacks yet as promised by the new UK government? So maybe I am asking if it is a good time to go back to UK.

There was a lot of panic at college because the government will be making cuts, which may have an impact on ESOL provision, but no-one is sure yet. The private language schools have also been hit by new Visa laws, but on the whole there seems to be stacks of work around.

So any tips for EFL teachers who decide to "go home"?

There are certainly areas of the UK which have more EFL provision than others, so if people aren't restricted to a specific area it might be an idea to move somewhere with a higher number of schools. There is, for example, nothing in Pontefract where I live (nobody ever knows where it is either!) So it means I do a lot of travelling

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into to places like York and Manchester. Also, you need to expect a different type of teaching – business English is not really in demand here, but things like IELTS and ESOL are (IELTS is huge!). It can also be a bit of a culture shock teaching multi-national groups, or, like one of my first classes, 12 Saudi men!

I have heard that it is increasingly important to have an MA to work in the UK. Is this true?

I work in the state sector and haven't got an MA. I am being 'encouraged' to do a PGCE which is a pain, as this is actually ranked below the DELTA qualification level, but DELTA is not recognised as a 'basic' qualification for FE colleges.

I tend to place quite considerable importance on being appropriately polite when preparing BMW guys to go to UK, for example. Are the British as polite as us ex-pats would fondly like to think they still are? Can you share any intercultural observations?

This is a funny question as I was just thinking about this last Friday. I had commented on a trainee's feedback that she hadn't really focussed on the issue of politeness linked to the functional language she had presented. Then, on the way home I stopped to buy some crisps and happened to listen to the conversation in front of me, which had not one 'please' or 'thank you' in it. Then on the train a person asked 'Anyone sitting here?' without the 'Excuse me' I'm sure I would have taught all my German students. But then the trolley man on the train, who was providing drinks and sandwiches, came through apologising profusely because his hot water boiler was broken and he couldn't sell tea and coffee as a result and the amount of polite responses he got was quite impressive! So, no, politeness is not dead, but I fear we aren't as polite here anymore as ex-pats still think we are!

Sue Morris spoke to Victoria Adams

Continued from page 12

(hotel stays in Edinburgh, Dublin and Brighton), these homestays had far more impact, in terms of cultural awareness and language practice. There was also more organization needed and, in this particular case, the involvement of my English friend. It isn't the right option for everyone – not all forty-plus women would be happy to go and live in someone else's house. I think you need a certain tolerance and ready acceptance of others. It must be said that a couple of the women were shocked by the standards of behaviour (wandering cats and semi-dressed husbands at the breakfast table, for example), but on the whole, things worked extremely well. A group of English women did the return visit to Munich twice and there was a great deal of pride in showing off the city of Munich and its surroundings.

So homestays are cheaper, provide greater cultural immersion and allow wider language exposure – but on the other hand require more organization. The group's experience is less homogenous, as they are each staying with different families. There is probably more chance of things going wrong, but the corollary is that when things go right they are wonderful – real friendships can develop between host and guest.

After a couple of years without a visit, we're hoping to go again next summer. Homestays aren't just for teenagers, they also fortify the over-forties (and the over-fifties and the over-sixties...)

Vivienne Arnold

Hot discussion topics on Ning

One of my favourite pre-teaching jobs was drinks waitressing on party boats on Lake Ontario in Toronto, although I didn't make many friends among the Canadian waitresses as I always got good tips because of my coveted "British accent"! Find out what MELTA members were up to in their former lives and let us know what brought you here on the MELTA Forum (under '**What did you do before you became an English teacher?**').

Visit the MELTA Ning forum at
<http://melta-forum.ning.com>

melta

Munich English Language Teachers Association e.V.
St Wolfgangplatz 6, 81669 München

The Munich English Language Teachers Association (MELTA) is a regional professional association for all teachers of English working in the Munich area: teachers at companies, private schools and the *Volkshochschule (VHS)*, as well as state school teachers. Established in 1989, MELTA is part of a wider network of English teachers' organisations throughout Europe and has especially close ties to the other English Language Teachers Associations (ELTAs) in Germany. MELTA is also affiliated with the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL).

MELTA provides a forum for:

- Information and experience exchange
- Training and teaching development
- Social contact and support

Guest speakers and practical workshops

By attending and taking part in MELTA events you can pick up new ideas and re-evaluate your own teaching. There are regular presentations and lectures in which you can meet leading people from the EFL/ESL field. The workshops also give you a chance to meet other teachers as well as to contribute your own ideas about English language teaching and discuss them. You can question your own and others' ideas about language training topics, helping you to become a better-informed and more effective trainer in the process. You will also receive a copy of our newsletter, *MELTA News*, written by members for members, three times a year. *MELTA News* includes topical articles on a range of ELT topics, interviews, and reviews of seminars, books and videos. There is also a calendar of local and international events in every issue.

MELTA membership benefits include:

- Presentations by leading EFL/ESL guest speakers
- Practical workshops and demonstrations
- Our newsletter, *MELTA News*, three times a year
- Social events

Social events

The MELTA calendar also lists social events, including our summer and Christmas get-togethers.

Become a MELTA member

Whether you've just arrived in Munich or have been here some time, MELTA provides a local opportunity for you to keep your teaching ideas and skills up-to-date and finely tuned and to contribute and exchange your own ideas if you wish. In addition, you have the chance to meet other people on both a professional and a social level. Come along to our next meeting and find out more. Our events are listed on www.melta.de.

The annual subscription is only €35, which includes our newsletter and free entrance to all MELTA events. You'll find the membership application form on the next page.

If you'd like more information, please get in touch with us by contacting:

Vivienne Arnold, Chair
(0 89) 15 97 90 99
chair@melta.de

Stephanie Shellabear,
Membership Secretary
(0 176) 63 68 99 32

info@melta.de

or visit our website at www.melta.de.

MELTA online – www.melta.de

On the MELTA website at www.melta.de you'll find:

- A programme of upcoming MELTA events
- Job offers
- Links to interesting topics
- A list of teachers. All MELTA members are invited to add their name.
- Teaching resources

With your MELTA membership you also get access to the MELTA Ning forum at <http://melta-forum.ning.com>

Membership lists

If you would like a list of fellow MELTA members, please contact:

Lisa Förster
MELTA Treasurer
c/o Lisa's Office, 81669 München
(0 89) 36 10 61 30
Fax: (0 89) 36 10 61 31
treasurer@melta.de

Please inform Lisa Förster if you change your address.

No direct debit yet?

Setting up a direct debit for MELTA fees will save you the hassle of remembering to transfer fees yourself each year. An authorization form is attached with the email fees reminder, you're more than welcome to fill it out and send/ fax to the Treasurer at the address above.

Changed banks?

If so, please let the Treasurer know: treasurer@melta.de. For each direct debit that has to be returned, MELTA incurs a penalty of €8 – so please help us to avoid unnecessary bank charges

MELTA membership application form

MELTA

Munich English Language Teachers Association e.V.
c/o Lisa's Office, St. Wolfgangspatz 6, 81669 München
(0 89) 3 61 061 30, fax (0 89) 3 61 061 31
www.melta.de

First name **Last name**
Address **Mr / Ms**
..... **Tel. no.**
Fax no. **Email**

Academic degree, qualifications (such as *Staatsexamen*, RSA, CELTA, DELTA, PGCE).....
.....

Participation in other organisations (such as FMF, IATEFL, TESOL).....
.....

Were you referred to MELTA by a current member?

- No
 Yes Name of member

The annual subscription is €35 (reduced rate for associated members and students: €15). Membership runs for the calendar year. Membership applications received mid-year are considered to be for the current calendar year. Applications received after October 1 are considered to be for the following calendar year.

Subscriptions may be paid by

- bank transfer into the association's account:
Konto-Nummer 7337017, Deutsche Bank, BLZ 700 700 24
- direct debit (*Einzugsermächtigung*) by filling out the form below
Hiermit ermächtige(n) ich/wir Sie widerruflich, den Jahresbeitrag bei
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Membership lists

Check one or both as applicable to you:

- I wish to have my name, address, tel/fax no. and email address on a list circulated among other MELTA members and agree not to pass this list on to third parties.
- Additionally, I allow MELTA to supply my name, address, tel/fax no. and email address to sponsors (such as language schools looking for teachers, publishers, travel agencies).

.....
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All data will be protected.

Send this form to: **Lisa Förster, MELTA Treasurer, c/o Lisa's Office, St. Wolfgangspatz 6, 81669 München.**
Please inform MELTA if you cancel your *Einzugsermächtigung*. MELTA has to pay a substantial charge if payment is refused.



Autumn/ Winter 2010

MELTA events

See www.melta.de for event updates. Many of the events are held at Gasteig, Rosenheimer Str. 5 (S-Bahn main line stop Rosenheimer Platz)

Please register your interest in attending any sessions with Rod Zook at events@melta.de

The listing for autumn may seem a little sparse as we go to press, but rest assured Rod Zook is working on the final details for more events before the end of the year. Do check the website – and watch your email inbox for his updates!

Saturday, 7 August

from 10:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
U-Bahn Scheidplatz

MELTA Radl Tour

A 'short' bike ride (about 50 km) from Scheidplatz to various lakes to the north of Munich. Don't worry if you aren't a mountain biker, we'll be avoiding hills... and roads (90% of the ride is along cycle paths or tracks). If the weather's bad, the tour will be postponed to the following week. Take your swimming gear with you if you fancy a swim in one of the lakes (Baggerseen = flooded gravel pits) we'll pass and enough food and liquid to keep you going. Please let John Sydes (see p. 3) know if you're thinking of coming. PS You can also confirm whether you're coming or not using the Events feature on the MELTA Forum/Ning

Sunday, 3 October 2010

11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Schottenhamel Festhalle

MELTA at the Oktoberfest

See page 3 for more details and watch the website!

Saturday, 4 December 2010

Gasteig Rm 3.147
2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Dogme in the classroom

Candy Olst

The current move in business English and beyond towards totally needs-based, learner focussed language training demands an approach that is as individually tailored as possible. This afternoon workshop will look at the three fundamental precepts of dogme (as presented and expounded in the book *Teaching Unplugged* by Scott Thornbury and Luke Meddings) and a number of classroom strategies on which they depend. The workshop will take a closer look at how to apply these strategies in a practical way in order to show how grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation can be worked on very effectively in a dogme classroom without recourse to any other resources.

Candy Olst was born in South Africa and raised, probably more unusually, in Swaziland. Aged 6 she can remember teaching the neighbour's younger children to read – so it was natural she later trained to become a teacher. After some years at a high school for fairly privileged young ladies, she felt compelled to start teaching ESL to growing numbers of disaffected, but enthusiastic students from the townships. She taught Literature to ESL exam candidates, survival English to refugees from other African countries and literacy to mature students. She left South Africa in 1999 and started teaching EFL at the centre where she still works in Warwickshire with an emphasis on tailor-made Business English programmes.

MELTA workshops are included in the annual membership fee. Non- and prospective members are very welcome to join us but will be charged €10 for a half-day and €15 for a full day workshop – or can join up on the day. Not enough time to network (or just catch up)? We typically spend an hour or so at the restaurant Gast after events, so do feel free to join us at around 5:15 p.m.– even if you haven't been able to attend the preceding workshop. Please indicate when you register if you plan to come so we can reserve enough space.

Saturday, 4 December 2010

Gasteig - room TBA
7:00 p.m. onwards

MELTA Christmas Party

Don't miss MELTA's end of year gathering with a pot-luck buffet, traditionally seasonal beverages and good company.

Can we top last year's night of entertainment? Come along and find out if the committee rises to the challenge of its discerning membership. If you have any suggestions, please let us know. Don't forget to bring a contribution to the buffet! For planning purposes, it would be a great help if you register in advance with Rod Zook at events@melta.de

Events of other organisations

3-5 September
Hamburg

EULETA Conference

European Legal English Teachers' Association
Information and registration at www.euleta.de

11 September
Frankfurt

ELTAF Conference

The most popular workshops are filling fast! Discount for MELTA members.
Information and registration at www.eltaf.de

11 September
Wetzikon, nr Zürich,

ETAS SIG Day

(English Teachers' Association Switzerland)
Information and registration at www.e-tas.ch

19-21 November
Bielefeld

IATEFL BESIG conference

Early-bird registration ends 31 August 2010, online registration closes 31 October.
Details at www.besig.org/events/conf2010.

17-19 March
Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

TESOL 2011

The 45th Annual TESOL Convention & Exhibition

15-19 April 2011
Brighton Centre, Brighton, UK

45th IATEFL Annual International Conference and Exhibition

Cambridge ESOL DELTA at the Münchner Volkshochschule DELTA Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults

DELTA enhances the knowledge and skills of experienced teachers and can open doors to the more prestigious and interesting jobs in English Language Teaching (ELT). It is designed for experienced teachers who already hold a CELTA and who have post-CELTA teaching experience. DELTA is considered a Master's level qualification; unusually for a qualification at that level, however, it adds to your practical teaching skills as well as your theoretical knowledge.

Cambridge ESOL has introduced a new three-module syllabus for DELTA. Each successfully completed module is certified by Cambridge ESOL, allowing you to make immediate professional use of the part of DELTA that you have completed. This is an excellent opportunity for keen and enthusiastic teachers of English to acquire a serious qualification with worldwide recognition.

The MVHS is offering a course in Module 1, "Understanding Language, Methodology and resources for teaching" (KG9917), as well as in Module 2 (KG9918Z). For more information about the different Modules and to find out how to apply please visit www.mvhs.de/delta.

The courses will take place at Gasteig, Rosenheimer Str. 5, (S-Bahn Rosenheimer Platz). If you are interested in following one of these courses, please contact Astrid Krake on (089) 480 066 152 or astrid.krake@mvhs.de.

KG 9917

Briony Beaven/Adrian Doff/Susan Morris • 10 x sa 10.00 bis 17.00 Uhr • 18.9. bis 30.10. und 13.11. bis 27.11.2010 • 2 x fr 14.30 bis 17.30 Uhr • 22.10. und 12.11.2010 • € 900 + Keine Ermäßigung • 8 Plätze

KG 9918 Z

Jahreskurs • 1. Semester • Briony Beaven • Volkshochschule • 9 x sa 10.00 bis 17.00 Uhr (mit jeweils einer Stunde Pause) • 8.1., 15.1., 29.1., 5.3., 19.3., 26.3., 9.4., 7.5., 14.5., 4.6. und 2.7.2011 sowie verschiedene individuelle Termine nach Absprache • € 1500 • 8 Plätze

Autumn 2010

Münchner Volkshochschule

teacher training workshops

Wenn nicht anders angegeben, finden die folgenden Veranstaltungen in der Volkshochschule am Gasteig, Rosenheimer Str. 5, (S-Bahn Rosenheimer Platz) statt. Telefonische oder schriftliche Anmeldung im Fachgebiet Englisch, Monika Schulze, (0 89) 4 80 06 - 62 59, monika.schulze@mvhs.de.

KG 9902 - 22.10.2010**KG 9903 - 21.1.2011**

Juliet Jones/Helga Morell/Hella Oliver
+ fr 14.00 bis 17.00 Uhr + Gebühren-
frei für Lehrkräfte der MVHS + € 24.-
für Externe + € 12.-- für Lehrkräfte
anderer Volkshochschulen + 10 Plätze

Teachers' Staffroom

The Teachers' Staffroom is here! This is a chance to exchange ideas and experiences with your colleagues over a few refreshments and to work on specific areas of English teaching.

There is a regular "show & tell" period where workshop participants bring along an activity they enjoy and have used successfully to share with the others in the group. Up-to-date topics in EFL are discussed ad hoc. New members always welcome!

KG 9902: Using newspapers; current events

KG 9903: Grammar without tears; teaching challenges, how to relate to students

KG 9905 - Samstagsseminar

Deborah Capras + sa 13.00 bis 16.00 Uhr
 + 13.11.2010 + Gebührenfrei + 20 Plätze

Beginners in English, Experts in Life: how to support your students' linguistic weaknesses and exploit their real-world experience

All too often low-level coursebooks (and teachers) start from the premise that there is a strong correlation between students' linguistic abilities and their general intelligence. This session - by one of the authors of "Global" Beginner and Elementary - will look at different ways to support low level students' learning while recognising and incorporating their real-world expertise.

Macmillan's new course "Global" wanted topics and texts that were international and culturally sensitive but engaging on an intellectual and affective level as well. The talk will also look at the features of this adult course and its components, including the eWorkbook, which offers, among other things, extra listening and video material. This workshop has been kindly sponsored by Macmillan Publishing.

KG 9907 - Samstagsseminar

Adrian Doff + sa 10.30 bis 12.30 Uhr +
 22.1.2011 + Gebührenfrei + 30 Plätze

Keeping it Real: speaking English in the real world

Speaking English has become an essential skill in the world's work and leisure environment, but how best to equip learners to use it? What kind of topics and materials are appropriate? What kind of language do learners need, and how can we relate this language to real life communicative goals? And how can we best reflect the reality of English as an international language spoken between people of different backgrounds and cultures?

This workshop will explore these questions, using practical examples from the new CUP adult course "English Unlimited".

This workshop has been kindly sponsored by Ernst Klett Sprachen GmbH.

KG 9908 - Samstagsseminar

Adrian Doff + sa 13.30 bis 15.30 Uhr +
 22.1.2011 + Gebührenfrei + 30 Plätze

Myself and Others: intercultural awareness in the EFL classroom

With the increasing recognition of English as an international language, there is general agreement about the importance of developing learners' intercultural awareness. But what kind of intercultural content is appropriate for the EFL classroom? And what kind of activities are likely to engage learners and genuinely develop awareness rather than simply reinforce existing prejudices about other cultures? This workshop will explore these questions, using practical examples.

This workshop has been kindly sponsored by Ernst Klett Sprachen GmbH.

KG 9901 - Freitagsseminar

Donna Liersch + fr 14.00 bis 17.00 Uhr + 28.1.2011 + Gebührenfrei für Lehrkräfte der MVHS + € 24 für Externe + € 12 für Lehrkräfte anderer Volkshochschulen + 15 Plätze

Teaching Conversation Classes

What exactly is a conversation class or course? Teachers and students often have different, sometimes conflicting, ideas about this. Is it simply all about discussing topical issues or is there more to it than that? This workshop will explore how to approach conversation courses, taking a look at appropriate topics and activities, as well as the important issue of how to go about improving your students' speaking skills.

The Munich CELTA

CELTA is an internationally recognised initial qualification for English Language Teaching to adults for people with little or no previous teaching experience. The course programme, staffing and facilities are approved by Cambridge ESOL, a division of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate. The course programme focuses on: language analysis and awareness, learners and teachers and the teaching/learning context; language skills; planning and resources; developing teaching skills and professionalism. Important and compulsory elements of the course are the observation of experienced teachers and teaching practice.

For general information please see www.cambridgeesol.org. For further information about the CELTA course and to apply please go to www.mvhs.de/celta. Should you have any further questions please contact CELTA Project Leader Dr. Briony Beaven (0 81 06) 30 06 31 or Senior CELTA Tutor, Sue Morris (0 81 22) 8 92 85 61.

KG 9911 - 9.10.2010**KG 9912 - 29.1.2010**

Amanda Momeni + sa 9.30 bis 16.30 Uhr + €55 + Please contact Dr. Beaven or Ms. Morris (see box above) before making a written application + 12 Plätze

CELTA Preparatory Grammar Course

This one-day course is designed to help participants on the CELTA course by offering a brief overview of English grammar immediately prior to the CELTA course. The course is strongly recommended for some CELTA participants and optional for others. In special circumstances and after consultation with the CELTA tutors, other teachers of English may be admitted on to this course.

KG 9913 Z

Briony Beaven/Adrian Doff/Emma Jones/ Amanda Momeni/Susan Morris + 24 x fr 14.00 bis 17.15 Uhr bzw. 14.00 bis 21.00 Uhr + 15.10.2010 bis 13.5.2011 + €1550 + 12 Plätze

Certificate in English Language Teaching to Speakers of Other Languages (Part-Time CELTA)

The part-time course allows you to obtain a CELTA qualification over a period of eight months.

The course is held on Fridays and times vary from 14.00 to 17.15, 20.15 or 21.00 (varying finish times). The schedule of times and days will be available to applicants during the selection process.

KG 9915 - Intensivkurs/Februar Innenstadt

Briony Beaven/Adrian Doff/Emma Jones/ Susan Morris + mo bis fr 9.00 bis 17.00 Uhr + 31.1. bis 25.2.2011 + €1550 + 12 Plätze

Certificate in English Language Teaching to Speakers of Other Languages (Full-Time CELTA)

This full-time course allows you to obtain a CELTA qualification over a period of four weeks.



MELTA News' serial on using
the internet for teaching

e-dictionaries

Dear Auntie Web,

I recently lost my pocket German dictionary. Everyone says I should ditch paper and go with either an electronic translator or a website – but what should I look for?

Love,
Tom

Dear Tom,

Back when I began learning German in high school, the only dictionaries were paper ones, like my tattered old three-inch-thick Cassell's German dictionary. By 2003, nearly forty years later, when I settled in Munich, times had changed. For the first few years, my portable electronic translator was my constant companion. Then in 2008 I got my first iPhone, and now I have dictionary applications for all my languages on it.

Nowadays I very seldom use the few paper dictionaries I still own. For serious language study, I invariably use an electronic dictionary on my laptop or desktop computer, either by running a stand-alone program or by pointing my browser at one of the many excellent online dictionaries. The big payoff is that this allows me to copy dictionary entries onto my computer's clipboard and then paste them into other applications and other documents, thus creating my own learning tools.

In my experience, here's the criteria I believe one should keep in mind when choosing such dictionaries. I will concentrate on web dictionaries, as the selection is broader and they benefit from being sharable by teacher and student.

Certainly, at least in the beginning stages of language learning, the primary focus should be on a bidirectional dictionary that will explain foreign words in the native language and help students to find the English words for their thoughts when they write in English. The student's native language will thus limit the available sites.

arguably the most important
part of the entry is the
pronunciation key

What features should this electronic dictionary have? Arguably the most important part of the entry is the pronunciation key. One absolutely must know how the word is spoken, all else is folly. From e-dictionaries we can rightfully expect a button that allows the student to

hear how the word is pronounced. Ideally, the button to be clicked merely plays the sound and does not change the page, so you can hear the sound while you're looking at the same page. And needless to say, the sound quality needs to be good enough for language learning. There are a few sites that leave something to be desired, though most are quite good enough.

Many sites have buttons for British as well as American pronunciation, while others simply provide one variation. You'll probably want the dictionary to be in the pronunciation that you're teaching, and perhaps that matches the transcription system favored by you and your students.

In addition to pronouncing the word (that is, playing a sound file), my personal experience tells me an online dictionary must also present the word in a 'phonetic' (i.e. phonemic) transcription. As problematic as such transcriptions can be, they are essential. In your own teaching you will certainly have found your favorite transcription system for English, probably either the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) or the Merriam-Webster system, where the Merriam-Webster system is probably more popular in the teaching of American English. I personally prefer the IPA, such as in my Oxford Dictionary, only of course there it's Oxford English, a foreign language that I largely understand but could never speak or teach.

phonetic transcriptions – you
may be in for a few unsightly
glitches

Regardless of the system, it is essential that there is a pronunciation guide, ideally available via a click on the entry page, which explains, by way of a set of well-known sample words, what the mapping is from symbols to sounds. How would one pronounce /ʃɛr ɒn 'dɪp ɪ tɔs/, for example? What does that funny /ɛ/ mean?

Many transcription systems use non-ASCII characters from the IPA, which can cause some problems with both display and input. With the transition to Unicode of both Mac OS and Windows, at least it is technically possible to produce these characters, though there are still plenty of problems, often with inputting such characters, but frequently as well with displaying and composing characters and diacriticals. And some characters like 'D', incorporate miniscule graphical flourishes that can be next to invisible at otherwise normal point sizes – not to mention the tendency of wispy diacriticals to suffer at nearly any screen resolution and to conflict with other flourishes. Add to this the fact that many websites

haven't quite caught up with Unicode, and the fact that you may not have the proper fonts installed to display a given font, and you may be in for a few unsightly glitches or worse.

Once knowing how to pronounce the word, students then needs some basic information to correctly categorize the word, like the part of speech, an unusual plural form, basic tenses for irregular verbs, countability, etc., which allow them then to use the word correctly in a sentence.

meanings – synthesized, summarized, and succinct

After the above-mentioned essential but short preliminaries, we get to the main attraction — the meanings of the word. Ideally they would be synthesized, summarized, and succinct, displayed graphically in a fashion that aids understanding, and not appear chaotic or overwhelming or require lengthy reading. At some sites, the entries are basically a database of word pairs and software capable of filtering and sorting them, but certainly not understanding them well enough to provide a succinct definition in the context of the headword. At many sites, there are discussion threads where you can find the dark corners plumbed, contemporary expressions explained, etc. At some sites the entries are nicely grouped into an overview section, which tends to be brief, and more detail usages, phrases, etc. later on the page. I personally appreciate this as it makes it easier for me to grab the succinct entries and copy-and-paste them elsewhere.

Though by no means necessary, an etymological entry adds a very nice touch to a dictionary, if not too long, and helps the student better understand – and remember – a word. Some web dictionaries offer this, and some even provide a thesaurus and synonyms.

A couple of features score particularly high in my books. Being able not only to listen to a sound file but also to save it to one's own local disk makes it easier to generate multi-media tools.

Another nice feature, which I have seen in one very simple dictionary, is a menu item that selects all of the related entries, in other words the main entry. This dictionary is a bit different from most, very simple, and that makes it much easier to implement. My request for Santa would be a universal button valid in all online dictionaries labelled 'Select Succinct Entry', which would limit itself to some number of characters, perhaps using artificial intelligence to summarize. (Though possible, such a solution would need to be customized for any given website.) And if this is not already too sci-fi, visual semantic

graphs and word clouds could be useful tools to get a feel for the word's dimensions.

Lastly, another nice feature is a list of the most proximate twenty or thirty headwords. For example, in looking up 'house', I see a list of 'hotpot, hotspot ... hourly, hours, house, house call ... house-warming', where each word is a link to a dictionary entry. This is very nice for exploring related words.

So, Tom. That's a long and not exactly direct answer to your question - yet! With these criteria in mind, I will evaluate a sample of the online dictionaries available that might be of interest to you and other MELTA members.

In the meantime, why not have a look at what's available online?

Yours, Auntie Web

This edition of Ask Auntie Web was penned by Bryan Lockwood. If you have any suggestions or queries regarding his foray into e-dictionaries you can get in touch with him by sending an email to melta.news@melta.de

MELTA Ning forum

Do you use videos in your teaching? How can using videos help to accelerate the learning process? What equipment is available nowadays?

Join the **Using video in the classroom** group on the MELTA Forum to get practical and technical ideas and to share your thoughts.

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Business English Taboo

Business English Taboo revisited

Mike Seymour shares his Business English reworking of 'Taboo' – the old favourite in which a group has to guess a word or expression written on a card that one of the players describes without mentioning any of the words on the card.

A favourite foolproof classroom activity of mine is Business English Taboo. I prepare index cards with business terms and/or business expressions written on them, trying to use as many compound expressions as possible as they can be explained word by word even if students don't know the whole term, for example, social networking website, relocation expenses, business trip, etc. I also throw in a few very abstract concepts as they are hard to explain, for example, morale, confidential, confident, trust and so on.

'Mrs Germany' (*Frau* + D standing for Germany)

This is a very simple exercise, requiring very little preparation. It usually goes down very well with students as they have to speak a lot and it reviews and/or teaches new vocabulary and practises paraphrasing and explaining, which comes up in everyday, real-life business.

I get one student to pick a card and then explain / define the term to the rest of the group so that they can guess what the word is, *without using*

- any part of the word on the card, and
- any insider or company-specific explanations (I always introduce my invisible brother, who is in the room but knows nothing about their company and who also has to be able to follow the explanation/definition)

If students get stuck I sometimes give them help/clues by breaking the word down into syllables (ex + ten + sion, my clue for 'sion' being 'a Kölsch beer brand') or by giving them cryptic crossword-style clues,

for example, the word 'fraud' can be rendered as 'Mrs Germany' (*Frau* + D standing for Germany). In many cases an off-the-wall clue or definition helps them to remember the word because the definition sticks in their mind better than the actual vocabulary item itself!

Recently I've been modifying this exercise and getting students to pick three or four cards at once and creating a short story/scenario incorporating the terms or expressions they have picked. I insist on the story or scenario making sense!

I have one student who hates this exercise but many more who really love it and who always ask me if they can play the 'card game'!

Mike Seymour

Matching expressions

Match the idiom

A pairing/translation activity for intermediate students

Pairs/small groups. Or, as a photocopy, suitable for work alone.

Cut up as a puzzle (on p. 32) and have your students match each German sentence with its English translation.

You may disagree with some translations. Your students may, too, so it's good for conversation starters. Please feel free to offer your feedback in the next issue.

Joan Walsh

Make your own crossword

Pairwork crossword

John Sydes with another reliable activity to get your students talking

Level: Intermediate (CEF B1, B2)

Target group: Students in a general English course (but can be adapted to any kind of course)

The principle of pairwork crosswords is that each student has a completed crossword and a blank crossword. Student A has the words that student B needs to complete their crossword and vice versa (see photocopyable examples on the next page). With affordable (or even free) crossword generating software you can tailor the vocabulary contained to match the language level and topic focus reflected in the crossword.

Time needed to complete the crosswords: approx. 60-90 min!

Ask the students to work in pairs or split the group into two teams. Give one of the students in each pair the Student A crossword and the other student the Student B crossword. Tell them not to show their crosswords to their partners.

Tell the students to take it in turns to ask each other for clues, e.g. What's the clue for six down? NB They may start wherever they like; they do not have to start with one across/down.

To make it more difficult tell the students they cannot use opposites to explain their words.

If the students get stuck, either with the giving the clues or guessing the word, the teacher can help.

John Sydes

Crossword Compiler (www.crossword-compiler.com) was used to make this crossword. A single-user licence costs £35. The Professional Bundle will set you back £119. BTW, this crossword is also on the Ning in the 'Stuff to Share' group.

Free crossword makers (which may leave you with more Tipp-Ex work!) are available online. Google them – or have a look at www.puzzle-maker.com/CW

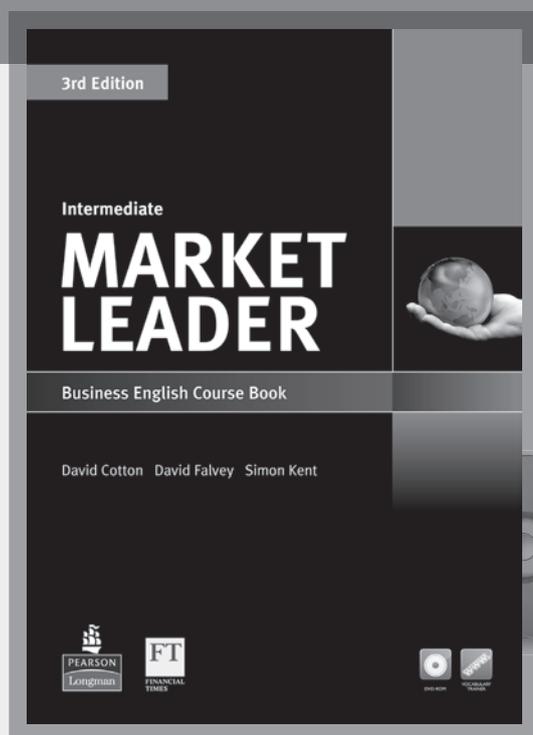
| | |
|--|---|
| 1. Jetzt aber, Butter bei die Fische. | a. You're going off track. You're losing the thread. |
| 2. Sie nimmt kein Blatt vor den Mund. | b. It's all my fault. |
| 3. Es wird Zeit, dass du in die Puschen kommst. | c. You don't reveal your plans to those they will affect. |
| 4. Es wäre gut ihn mit ins Boot zu holen. | d. That's incredible. That's really not on. |
| 5. Das war ein Wink mit dem Zaunpfahl. | e. Now you're really pulling my leg. |
| 6. Eine Krähe hackt der anderen kein Auge raus. | f. Get your act together. |
| 7. Du kommst vom Hölzchen auf Stöckchen. | g. First, I have to exercise some willpower / discipline. |
| 8. Wer den Teich trocken liegen möchte, darf nicht die Frösche fragen. | h. You'd better pull up your socks. |
| 9. Das geht auf keine Kuhhaut. | i. It would be to our advantage to get him on board. |
| 10. Jetzt hast Du mir wohl einen Bären aufgebunden. | j. That was a broad hint. |
| 11. Er ist auf den Hund gekommen. | k. Let's get down to brass tacks. |
| 12. Ich muss erst meinen inneren Schweinehund überwinden. | l. She says exactly what she thinks. She makes no bones about it. |
| 13. Auf geht's, Zack, Zack | m. He's really gone to the dogs. |
| 14. Asche auf mein Haupt | n. You don't cut your own throat. |

Suggested solutions: 1k, 2l, 3h, 4f, 5j, 6n, 7a, 8c, 9d, 10e, 11m, 12g, 13f, 14b



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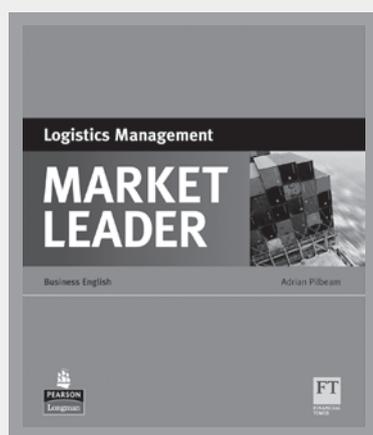
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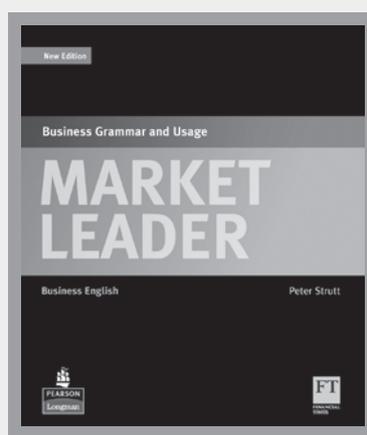
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RTÉ Radio 1: *Sunday Miscellany*

Audio perfection

Vivienne Arnold shares a great internet source of short stories and anecdotes.

MELTA Library

The MELTA library is located at Lisa's Office, St. Wolfgangplatz 6, near Rosenheimer Platz. Please give Lisa Förster a call on (0 89) 36 10 61 30 before stopping by. She can tell you when she will be in and whether the book you want is currently available.

Titles in the MELTA library:

- Christie, David, *New Basis for Business*
- Dornyei, Zoltan, *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*
- Förster, Lisa / Kerr-Dineen, Catherine, *Business English live*
- Hess, Natalie, *Teaching Large Multi-level Classes*
- Medgyes, Peter, *Laughing Matters*
- Mifsud, Charles / Mallia, Gorg, *Ways and Measures*
- Thornbury, Scott, *Natural Grammar*
- Ur, Penny, *A Course in Language Training*
- Ur, Penny / Wright, Andrew, *Five minute activities*
- Wajnryb, Ruth, *Stories*
- Williams, Isobel, *Office Matters: Englisch für kaufmännische Berufe*
- Woodward, Tessa, *Planning Lessons and Courses*
- *Learner Independence Worksheets (IATEFL)*

In the MELTA library you will also find:

- A teaching folder with a CD from Hermann Graßl
- Back issues of *IATEFL Voices*
- A complete set of back issues of *MELTA News*

On Sunday mornings a programme of new essays and poetry can be heard on Irish radio RTÉ Radio 1: *Sunday Miscellany*. The reason this particular programme is useful for teachers is that each reading is about 700 words long (about 4 to 5 minutes in length) and so gives you an opportunity to find a decent piece of audio for more advanced learners. The Goldilocks effect – it's not too long and it's not too short: it's just right!

use the archive to plan ahead for next year

If you go to the website you can see which programmes are available, and when you subscribe to the podcast, you can download any of the previous podcasts (all from 2010). So you can plan ahead for *next year* – Independence Day, St Patrick's Day, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day – and prepare the programme from earlier *this year*. In the run up to the World Cup I'd done a quiz with one of my classes and one of the questions was 'What was the name of the dog that found the lost World Cup in 1966?' The answer, as any English person will know, is Pickles – and blow me, if the following Sunday 27 June, there wasn't a story about Pickles. Brilliant!

In the same programme, amongst others, was a mother's description of how she deals with the exam stress of her children; a successful writer reflecting on a romantic encounter when he was a teenager; and an account of a fiery celebration on the last day of school.

Unfortunately, there isn't a transcript, but before the lesson, you can go through each audio once, identify

any tricky vocabulary, and then either write some comprehension questions or in the lesson ask some questions as students are listening. And of course you can use the story as a springboard for more conversation activities. With Pickles, you could talk about dogs, pets, losing things, finding precious things, stealing and so on. This programme could also be used very well in a one-to-one lesson in which you let the student keep a finger on the 'pause' button. If you are able to bring in two MP3 players (or a laptop) you could divide your class in to two groups (A and B) with each group listening to a different story: after listening and discussing the summary of the story in their small groups, people work in pairs (one from A and one from B) to retell the story they have just listened to. And then as a whole class, you replay both stories.

The readings, all carefully presented by their Irish authors, are so varied, that *Sunday Miscellany* is the perfect name for the programme and the perfect source of audio material. You'll find it on the internet at www.rte.ie/radio1/sundaymiscellany

Vivienne Arnold

MELTA Ning forum

How much should a new teacher expect to be paid? Should you charge travel expenses? Are qualifications reflected in what you earn?

Read the comments about **teacher rates of pay** on the MELTA Forum (under 'Freelance Earnings?') to find out more and add your own opinion.

Visit the MELTA Ning forum at <http://melta-forum.ning.com>

Car Tech

Train the Trainer



This is a two-day hands-on training course in technical English for the car industry which is designed both for new and for established/experienced English trainers.

The two days will cover questions of the syllabus and corresponding methodology for this industry.

The following areas of car technology will be covered:

1st day

9.00-13.00

- The body
- Design
- The interior
- Electronics

14.00-18.00

- The chassis
- The engine and powertrain
- Motoring
- Tour of Audi production line

Key issues affecting the various areas of car technology, as well as techniques and activities for their exploitation in the classroom will be identified.

Participants will receive a trainer resource pack of course materials.

2nd day

8.00-12.00

- Production
 - The press shop
 - The body shop
 - The paint shop
 - The assembly

13.00-17.00

- Development
- Quality assurance
- Case studies

Heilbronn

| | |
|--|---|
| Date | Friday 24 September 09.00-18.00 & Saturday 25 September 08.00-17.00 |
| Location | Audi Akademie GmbH, Felix-Wankel Str. 9, 74078 Heilbronn |
| Trainer | John Bolton |
| Cost | 520 Euro; A 20% discount for ELTA members is available. |
| Closing date for registrations: September 06.10 | |

Ingolstadt

| | |
|--|---|
| Date | Friday 15 October 09.00-18.00 & Saturday 16 October 08.00-17.00 |
| Location | Audi Akademie GmbH, Schlüterstr. 3b, 85051 Ingolstadt |
| Trainer | John Bolton |
| Cost | 520 Euro; A 20% discount for ELTA members is available. |
| Closing date for registrations: September 27.10 | |

From the bookshelves

Grammar

Scott Thornbury

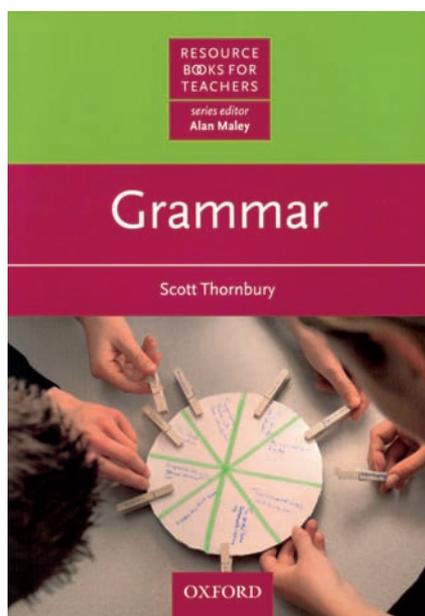
OUP (Cornelsen), 2006

Resource Books for Teachers series,

editor Alan Maley

132 pages, €25.99

ISBN: 978-0-194-42192-8



‘Grammar, like death and taxes, is one of the few certainties in the life of a language teacher’ (Maley, p. 3). It is the subject we love to hate. Whether language teachers like teaching grammar or not, they cannot avoid dealing with it. And many teachers rise to the challenge of making grammar interesting and fun. The author has drawn on his wide range of experience to offer teachers a rich selection of lesson-enhancing activities.

Grammar is part of OUP’s well-known Resource Books for Teachers series. *Grammar* helps teachers to extend their range of classroom techniques for teaching grammar to secondary and adult students. It also offers practical and engaging activities to assist both experienced and novice teachers when teaching English grammar.

Grammar shares the same format as the other titles in the series. First, there is an introduction in which the author describes and illustrates the point, purpose, intended audience, and organization of each activity in the book. The point of the book, as Thornbury explains, is to look at grammar beyond sentence-level grammar and approach it also from the word and text levels. The purpose of the book is to offer its intended audience (teachers in general) fun, challenging and motivating ways to teach these different levels of grammar.

While traditional grammar-teaching texts primarily focus on word and sentence-level grammar, this book covers grammar at three levels: word, sentence, and text. Thornbury strongly believes that grammar should not be studied as ‘single, decontextualized, sentences’ because ‘most language in use occurs, not as sentences, but as cohesive text’ (p. 103). As such, text grammar (or discourse grammar) is also treated in this book in a way that at least some English language teachers will appreciate.

The book’s three sections – word grammar, sentence grammar, and text grammar – provide thorough coverage of grammar in use.

Part I deals with word grammar. In this section, Thornbury offers 15 activities that range from teaching basic metalinguistic terminology (for example, nouns, verbs, adjectives) to consciousness-raising of grammatical items (for example, pronouns, determiners, prepositions) to chunking of grammatical structures (for example, *that* clauses).

Part II treats sentence grammar or syntax, that is, the rules that govern the structure of sentences. The author emphasizes in this section that while form is crucial, form and meaning are inseparable and must be attended to equally. Thus there are 35 activities in this section that

offer teachers a surplus of ideas to develop learners’ ability to deduce grammatical rules and produce both well-formed and meaningful English sentences. The activities range from introducing new grammatical structures (for example, verb phrases) to reflecting on common errors (for example, -ing or to-infinitive) to reviewing structures (for example, noun-phrases).

Part III provides activities for teaching text grammar. Thornbury asserts that ‘a lot of grammar is intelligible only in context. If it is intelligible only in context, it is probably best studied and practised only in context, too’ (p. 103). In this part of the book, Thornbury offers 12 activities to raise students’ awareness of how contextual environments determine grammatical choices.

Each activity from the book is labelled as follows: level, time, aims, materials, preparation, procedure, variations, follow-ups, and comments. While Thornbury provides detailed steps for engaging students in each activity, he reminds us that local teaching/learning settings and needs of the students will ultimately determine the appropriateness of each activity. Thus we can say that each activity can be adapted to meet the needs of a particular curriculum, syllabus, and class. And beyond additional follow-up activities the author also provides variations for teaching the same activity. A ‘Comments’ section in which the author offers words of wisdom and pedagogical suggestions is also included. The variations, follow-ups, and 62 concrete activities add up to well over 100 activities that can help teachers zest up their grammar teaching.

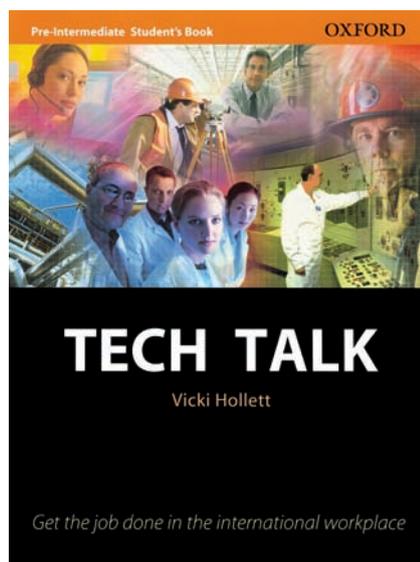
At the back of the book there is an appendix with a list of the ‘100 most frequent words of English’ based on the BNC (British National

Continued on page 39

From the bookshelves

Tech Talk

Pre-intermediate
Vicki Hollett and John Sydes
OUP (Cornelsen), July 2005
127 pages, €29.95
ISBN: 978-3-464-24692-4



The authors are obviously well-seasoned English teachers themselves. The table of contents of this book clearly lines out the chapters. This is absolutely necessary for pre-intermediate students. The layout is excellent and the graphics and photos are both relevant to today's world and are often humorous and will engage the interest of the student. The choice of topics is a broad range from the personal to the professional realm, and is thus useful in the student's life. The student will find the grammar and vocabulary a solid base to continue studying English.

The focus of this student book is the workplace and it covers a lot of topics from safety hazards to company benefits. No matter what profession the student may have, the topics are bound to hit on specific terms that would apply to his or her work. The topics themselves are informative in their own right so the student will learn about the work world, new technology and interesting subject matter while at the same time getting a firm grasp on grammar and vocabulary.

Especially beneficial are the 'Review and Remember' chapters after every third lesson, which allow the student to recall the material presented in the previous three chapters. Interactive activities are suggested that are creative and fun.

The CD is not included in the book. A quick look at the transcript of the CD at the back of the book however indicates a gradual progression to the dialogues and listening comprehension exercises.

The 'Information File' at the back of the book is also useful for additional activities to supplement and enhance the various chapters. There is no glossary, however.

Would I buy this book? Yes, and I would like to have the books for the elementary and intermediate levels as well. I would recommend it to anyone teaching English, especially to those with students who are interested in learning technical terms and business English.

Denise Wade

Books for review

The following books have been kindly donated by the publishers for review in MELTA News.

Should you be interested in reviewing any of them, please contact diana@melta.de – you get to keep the book you review.

Cambridge

- *Infotech*, English for computer users (4th edition), Student's Book

Cornelsen

- *Headway A1*, complete package + audio CD
- *Headway B1*, complete package + audio CD
- *First Choice Language Trainer A1/A2*

Hueber

- *Next A1*
- *Next A2/1*, package (student's book + audio CD)

Klett

- *Fairway Refresher A2*, Englisch für Wiedereinsteiger, Lehr- u. Arbeitsbuch + Audio-CDs

Macmillan

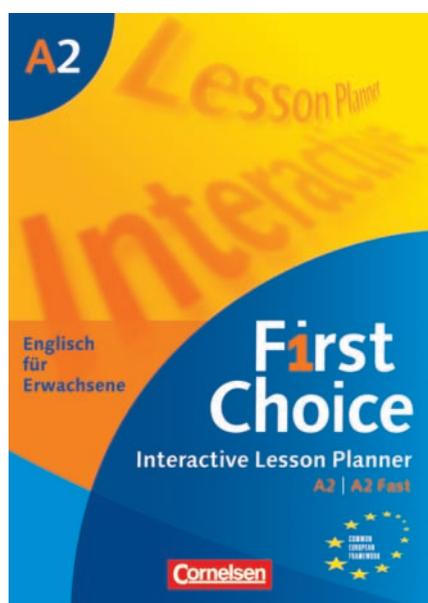
- Macmillan Testbuilders:
 - *BEC Higher Testbuilder*
 - *FCE Testbuilder*
 - *Testbuilder Level 1*
 - *Testbuilder Level 2*
 - *Testbuilder Level 3*
- *In Company Elementary*, Student's Book + audio CD
- *In Company Pre-Int* + audio CD
- *In Company Upper-Int* + audio CD
- *LCCI English for Business*
- *Macmillan Exams – Ready for IELTS* coursebook
- *The Business*, Advanced Student's Book + DVD ROM
- Macmillan Readers: *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Kick-off! The Story of Football*, *Macbeth*

Continued on page 39

Recent publications

**First Choice
Interactive Lesson Planner**
Englisch für Erwachsene

A2/A2 Fast

 Briony Beaven, Irene Hofer, Astrid Hornoff, Christine House, Angela Lloyd, Allison Schöne, John Stevens, et al
 Cornelsen, €29.95
 ISBN: 978-3-464-01962-7


This digital teachers' resource is a teaching tool integrating the teacher's book, the course book, audio material and didactic advice – all available on one disc.

When you start the CD, a window with six bookmarks pops up: 'The Planner', 'Materials', 'Tools', 'Teacher development', 'Internet' and 'Information'.

From this number of various categories alone you can assume that the CD is a rich resource of all sorts of useful tips and details for teachers. And your assumption is far from being wrong.

The Planner has a symmetrical structure: on the left-hand side of the computer screen there are all the units as they appear in the course book. You can leaf through the book on your screen if you wish.

On the right-hand side, you will find didactic help for teachers: there's 'Commentary' – teachers' notes, 'Vocabulary' – a list of lexical items taught in the given unit with their German equivalents, 'Extras' – additional activities with detailed description of the teaching procedure, 'Audio' and the 'Answer key' for the exercises in the course book. Each of these is also available in Word format at the bottom of the page and can be printed out.

The 'Commentary' contains teachers' notes and advice on how to structure your lesson, i.e. what your students will have achieved by the end of each unit, defined as 'Can-do' statements. Furthermore, it gives you detailed information on material you'll need throughout the unit together with the exact reference, i.e. Photocopiable material 1.1.

The last part of the Commentary is the teaching procedure you should follow in your class.

The vocabulary part of the Planner follows the principle of the lexical approach in that it lists chunks of language as opposed to single items, e.g. on holiday, and not: 'holiday'. This makes it easier for the students to learn commonly used prepositions combined with newly learnt nouns.

The next bookmark, 'Materials', is basically an extended digital version of the teacher's book.

Along with the 'photocopiable' resources, audio files with audio scripts and the answer key, there is yet another set of extras: 'Partner files' – short role plays to practice speaking. On top of that, there are 'Learner Webpages' that contain internet links to the publisher's free online material for each unit of the book.

And now to the most useful part of the software: Tools. They are 'a practical instrument for creating worksheets, for analysing texts with regard to progression of the vo-

cabulary level, as well as identifying where a word occurs'.

This feature has to be installed separately on your computer and it then opens automatically in Word. To illustrate its main purpose, let me give an example of the worksheet generator. This instrument allows you to create six different types of worksheets: The Letter Mixer – scrambles letters in single selected words in the text, the Word Mixer – does the same on the word level, and the Sentence Mixer – on the sentence level.

There is also the Gap Text feature, which creates gapped texts, the classical Crossword, and the Word-snake, where spaces between words and punctuation are deleted.

The next bookmark entitled 'Teacher development' is a real gem. It guides you through Skills and Knowledge, Reflection and Evaluation, Lesson Plan, Glossary and the Reading List.

Alongside a general introduction to topics such as teaching techniques, language systems, practice, skills and differentiation (each including examples of how to apply them to First Choice) you will also get tips on how to promote independent learning and how best to consolidate learning content.

In the Reflection and Evaluation part you will find worksheets, which follow each of the sections introduced under the heading 'Skills & Knowledge'. By means of these you can assess your teaching skills, thereby setting your own goals, recording your achievements and keeping track of your long-term aims.

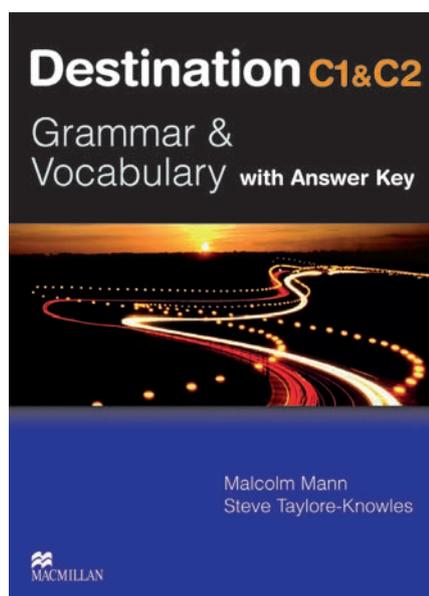
To sum it all up, I would strongly recommend the Interactive Lesson Planner to every teacher new to the teaching profession. I also believe that old hands can add to their teaching repertoire and refresh their knowledge of EFL theories.

Justyna Freudenthal

Recent publications

Destination C1 and C2

Malcolm Mann and
Steve Taylor-Knowles
312 pages, €19.95
Macmillan (Hueber), 2009
ISBN: 978-3-190-62955-8



Be warned: there are no pictures in this book! The only colour is some green shading in the grammar boxes and the occasional title of an exercise. However, it's a goldmine as a resource book for vocabulary. Topics include 'Power and social issues',

Continued from page 36

Corpus), a 'Further Reading' page, a 'Glossary' of grammatical terms and an index. This collection of practical teaching ideas also comes with photocopyable worksheets. Ready-made lessons provide additional support for teachers.

In conclusion I can only say that *Grammar* is one of the must-haves of an English teacher. It is a book full of entertaining and productive grammar activities that will make teaching enjoyable.

Elena Ilie

'Materials and the built environment', and 'Movement and transport'. At higher levels it's quite often the case that students have learnt lots of grammar, which they would like to revise and refresh, but have a real need for new vocabulary. This book presents both grammar and vocabulary in each of the double units, underpinned by revision and consolidation. Each unit presents particular grammar rules and examples on a two-page spread (this is pretty typical of any grammar book) and then the second half of each unit is dedicated to vocabulary – showing phrasal verbs; phrases, patterns and collocations; idioms and word formation. All of these are collected at the back of the book in a useful database section – an extremely valuable resource for the student.

This is not a standalone book. It is a resource and workbook that should be used with other reading or listening materials. It's great to dip in and out of. A great book for groups who want to broaden their general vocabulary and refresh their grammar.

Vivienne Arnold

Books for review, cont'd from p.37

Macmillan (continued)

- *Science Fiction Stories*
- *Geography*. Macmillan Vocabulary Practice Series
- *English World*, Level 4, pupil's book
- *English World*, Level 5 set (pupil's book, grammar book + dictionary)
- *Elementary Language Practice*, 3rd Edition
- *New Inside Out*, Advanced Student's Book + CD-ROM
- *Language Practice*
- *Global Elementary*
- *Global Pre-Intermediate*
- *Business Vocabulary Builder*
- *Networking in English* + audio CD
- *Code Red*, Student's Book (B2)

Marshall Cavendish

- *Achieve BULATS* + audio CD
- *English for International Business*

Oxford

- *Nursing 1*, Show you care in English, Student's Book
- *Business Basics*, International Edition, Student's Book
- *Business Objectives*, International Edition, Student's Book
- *International Express*, Student's Book Pre-Intermediate with Pocket Book + Multi-ROM
- *International Express*, Student's Book Intermediate with Pocket Book
- *Verbs and Tenses* (Test it, Fix it)
- *Business Vocabulary Intermediate*
- *Oxford Grammar Practice* (Basic)
- *Oxford Grammar Practice (Deutsche Ausgabe)* (Basic)
- *CAE Result!*, Student's Book
- *English for Life Elementary*, Student's Book

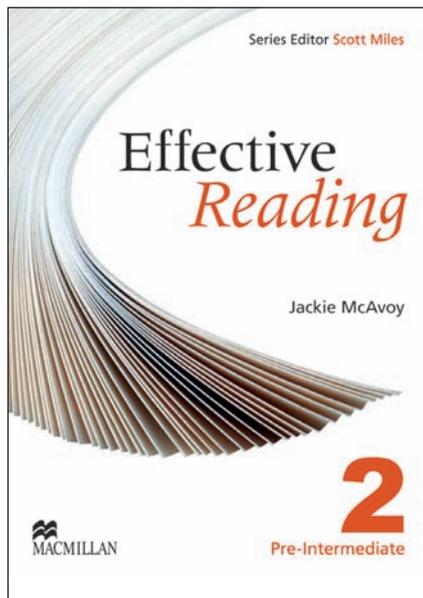
Recent publications

Effective Reading 1, Elementary

Chris Gough and Scott Miles
 Macmillan (Hueber), 2009
 128 pages, €16.95
 ISBN: 978-3-190-92576-6

Effective Reading 2, Elementary

Jackie McAvoy and Scott Miles
 Macmillan (Hueber), 2009
 128 pages, €16.95
 ISBN: 978-3-191-02576-2

**Overall impression**

Attractive, the material is well-presented.

Layout

Clear, uncluttered. Texts are broken up into manageable chunks.

A little colour is used to liven up the page, but not so much as to give a messy impression. Cartoons and pictures are used sparingly. The impression is of a serious adult book.

Choice of exercises

Grammar: well-presented and introduced in small, manageable amounts.

Pre-reading exercises: introduce key vocabulary and arouse interest in the topic.

Comprehension exercises: well-designed to help students under-

stand the content, to understand vocabulary in context, leading them towards being able to use the new vocabulary in a new context.

Special features: informal words, new English words and phrasal verbs introduced in context. There are also creative activities such as coming up with titles to stories.

Balance between content and language input and practice

Enough interesting text per se to justify the exercises based on it.

Suggestions for conversation in each chapter. Could be extended by the teacher.

Choice of topics

Up-to-date, interesting for different age groups. The gender equality chapter in book 2 is highly commendable.

Interesting tasks: Interest level maintained throughout the book.

Recommendation

I would buy these books and recommend them for extra reading activities to teachers doing conversation classes or classes with course books. They are however too difficult for self-study at the levels stated.

Brigitte Wedderburn

Effective Reading 4, Upper Intermediate

Amanda French and Peter Nicoll
 Macmillan (Hueber) 2010
 160 pages, €16,95
 ISBN: 978-3-191-32576-3

This book is the highest level at B2 of four books. Each unit in the upper intermediate book deals with one theme and the units follow a similar structure: pre-reading, comprehension, vocabulary skills, grammar and speaking sections. However, the format and number of tasks vary so that the activities do not become predictable or mechanical and it is not necessary to do all the units in the right order. The grammar sections also deal with less obvious points such as inversion after negative adverbials, use to / used to _ing, alongside the usual revision of tenses and gerunds.

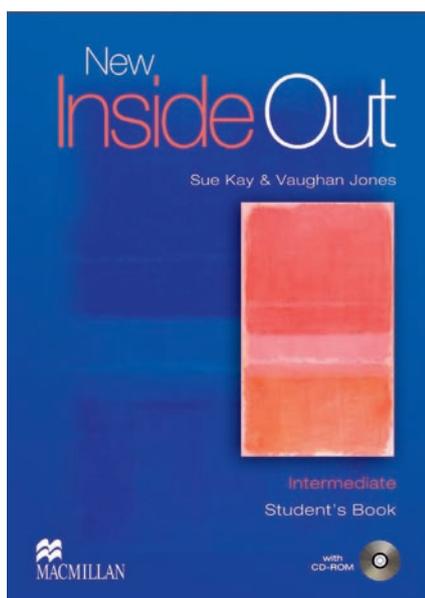
A lot of attention is given to vocabulary so that the student learns to recognize and understand vocabulary passively and then progresses to using it more actively. The texts are well chosen and cover a large variety of genre, each unit offering two related texts. After every two units there are two more texts in a review section, so there is plenty of material for the students (and teachers) to get their teeth into.

The book ends with a useful vocabulary list of base words and their common forms and the answer key and teacher notes can be downloaded free from the Macmillan website.

Heather Weik-Price

New Inside Out

Intermediate (B1)
Sue Kay and Vaughan Jones
Macmillan (Hueber), 2009
160 pages, €24.95
ISBN: 978-3-194-32970-6



The *New Inside Out* Intermediate Student's Book is nicely presented in colour, with glossy pages and many pictures. There are twelve eight-page units, and four review sections. Each unit is based around a theme, and has speaking, writing, reading, listening, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation activities.

The books' activities are designed for solo or pair work – no group activities are provided. However, most pair activities are speaking tasks, and could be used as they are or adapted for group work. The content would appeal to younger learners (teenagers and perhaps those in their early 20s), as it covers topics relevant for young people, such as relationships and parties, and draws on television and movies, such as the 'Friends' television show.

Grammar is given in easy-to-digest chunks. Some information about each grammar point is given briefly in the main body of the unit, followed by practice activities. Further information is provided in the 'Grammar Extra' section at the back of the book.

The book has an excellent range of supplementary material, including a list of irregular verbs, a list of IPA phonetic symbols and corresponding words, a glossary of grammar terms, recording transcripts, a series of additional activities from each unit for pair work, and a section with more detailed grammar information. The book also comes with a CD-ROM that provides other self-study activities including video clips.

Catherine Finn

MELTA News**submission guidelines**

- Submit your article in Microsoft Word or a compatible format.
- Please add a top line, a heading (headline), and a lead-in. This is the text that introduces an article. See the way articles in this issue begin for examples.
- Choose an interesting quote for highlighting from the article.
- Use *italics* for emphasis, non-English words and book titles.
- Format your article in the general way you would like to see it in print so that the editor has an idea of what you had in mind. (Don't go overboard on this.)
- Use single spacing between sentences and paragraphs.
- Submit pictures, illustrations and tables separately.
- Submit high-resolution pictures (300 dpi or above). Most digital cameras will take high-resolution pictures by default.
- Use single quotes.
- Spellcheck your document.
- A column in *MELTA News* is approx. 250 words long. One page is thus 750 words long.
- Don't forget to add your biographical data! We need about 50 words about you; see 'Contributors' at the back of each issue for examples.
- Send your copy to melta.news@melta.de

Hot discussion topics on Ning

What is the best way to teach grammar? Why do some learners always seem to make the same grammar mistakes? How can we deal with that?

Share your experiences and learn from each other by joining the **Grammar Gurus** group on the MELTA Forum.

Visit the MELTA Ning forum at <http://melta-forum.ning.com>

**Contributors to this issue of
MELTA News**

Vivienne Arnold is the MELTA Chair. A freelance English teacher from Lancashire, England, she's lived in Munich since 1998, having initially planned to stay for just 12 months. She recently completed her MA in Applied Linguistics and ELT.

Diana Diodati-Konrad worked as a high-school teacher in Australia before moving to Italy where she first started working as a freelance English trainer. She moved to Munich in 1995 where she gives in-company training courses.

Catherine Finn, a New Zealander of Irish descent, moved to Munich very recently. She is currently working as a freelance English trainer, teaching business and academic English. Catherine has a Masters' degree in Anthropology, which has provided her with useful career skills such as criticising things and writing convoluted sentences. When she's not engaged in her academic or teaching pursuits, you'll find her trying out new recipes in the kitchen, enjoying the outdoors, or visiting her family-in-law in Prague.

Justyna Freudenthal is an English teacher with over 10 years experience, in both a corporate and private environment. She used to work as DOS in Warsaw, Poland, before she moved to Munich in 2006. DELTA qualified, she is interested not only in teaching English to adults, but also in training teachers new to the profession. She's been part of the Language Centre at the University of the German Armed Forces (*Universität der Bundeswehr*) since 2008.

After almost 32 years of life, uncountable residences in 13 US and European cities, and a number of odd jobs and half-professions, **Dennis Lamb** still has no idea of where to begin when introducing himself. He is a lover of music, film, taking things apart (literally and

figuratively), cooking, photography, and talking about himself in the third person.

Bryan Lockwood has been studying languages since high school, where he started with German and French. He is a *Quereinsteiger* who is fascinated with computers, taught himself to program them, and spent most of his career in software engineering. After retiring he moved to Munich in 2003, where he continues to actively study German, French, and Thai. He does not eschew split infinitives. He firmly believes that computers can be a powerful tool in the teaching profession, and enjoys helping others to better utilize them.

Sue Morris, a former MELTA Chair, has been teaching for more years than she cares to remember. She currently teaches for companies and ministries in Munich and is the Senior Tutor on the CELTA course run at the Munich VHS.

John Sydes comes from the UK and has been teaching English in Germany since the early 80s. He runs a small team of trainers who teach in-company courses. John has co-authored several EFL course books and is an administrator of a forum for English Teachers in Germany: <http://elt.yuku.com/>

Lindsey Persons is a Minnesota native who has never really returned since her first trip abroad in college. She's currently working as a freelance English trainer in Munich in multiple mediums. She enjoys humour, pop culture and non-fiction books as well as spending time with her family doing sports of all sorts!

Originally from the northeast of England, **Helen Strong** moved to Ingolstadt in 1999 to work as a Business English Trainer at Audi Akademie. She now works freelance in both corporate and academic environments. She takes a keen interest in the use of technology in teaching and is also the editor of Business Spotlight in the Classroom. To get away from it all she likes to head to the mountains, either with her snowboard or her motorbike.

Denise Wade was born in Japan and raised around the world – a third-culture kid by definition. She currently works for Berlitz and is hoping to expand her professional sphere teaching English. Her hobbies are reading, travelling, yoga and archery.

Joan Walsh is a freelance English trainer working mostly at companies. She hails originally from Ireland. She enjoys the buzz of MELTA and its activities and is the advertising coordinator. Joan tries to keep her brain fit and to understand the world at large better by travelling and experimenting with languages.

Brigitte Wedderburn is a Swiss teacher from Zürich. After marrying a Scotsman she spent many years in Scotland and England. Now in Bavaria she is involved in teaching English and in various church committees.

Heather Weik-Price has worked for many years at the Munich Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in the Department of English and American Studies. In addition to her teaching job she has also written the Langenscheidt business English calendar. She lives in Weilheim with her German husband and two boys. In her spare time she loves hiking, cycling, inviting friends and neighbours round for a chat and growing vegetables on her little plot of land on the so-called 'Sonnenacker'.

For those of you who don't know her, **Ilse Wolfram** has a long association with MELTA, joining soon after it was founded in '89 and being Secretary for 14 years. Born in Vienna, she came to Munich because of her husband's job and built her own dual career in administration and English teaching. She is MELTA's first honorary member and recently gained her doctorate from LMU in Munich.

The (mis)adventures of Lucy Chapman

The right level

Episode 21

Lucy's idea to publish a best seller called English for Secretaries was definitely not going well.

Pete her editor-cum-publisher didn't seem to have a clue about writing course books, nor did he seem to know anything about the EFL market in Germany.

Before Lucy had started putting her draft units together, she suddenly realised that she hadn't really thought about what level this book should be. Were there more low-level learners out there or should she aim the book at upper-intermediate or advanced-level students?

She wondered whether Pete had any advice, but as she'd feared, he didn't know and when Lucy told him it was key that the book was aimed at the right level, i.e. the level where they were likely to get the most sales, Pete had told her she was the English teacher and she should know what level the book should be.

Brilliant! Not only was Pete hopeless as an editor, he didn't seem to know much about marketing or sales either.

Lucy decided she would have to do her own market research, but how?

She wondered whether there were any EFL bookshops in Germany she could contact, but when she tried googling them she got lots of hits for German shops selling English books, but by the look of things, they sold novels rather than EFL books.

Eventually she decided there was only one way to find out and that was to post herself in the English department of Hugendubel in Marienplatz and make a note of which course books people bought.

The following Saturday she got up early and arrived at Hugendubel at 9.00 armed with a pen and paper.

Hans had been a bit confused when she'd told him that he'd have to do the shopping because she was going to be in Hugendubel all day.

'What are you going to do in Hugendubel all day?' he'd asked.

'Count books, of course!' Lucy'd replied.

She could see that Hans had been totally puzzled by her response, but she decided to leave him to puzzle out what was going on. 'After all,' she told herself, 'Hans had been responsible for putting her in touch with that useless publisher.'

Lucy decided she would have to do her own market research

It soon became pretty clear to Lucy that Mr Hugendubel hadn't become a millionaire thanks to sales of EFL books, in fact, in the first hour she'd been there only three people had bought a course book and it had been the same one, Headfirst.

Lucy hoped that higher level students got up later because she certainly didn't fancy writing a course book for secretaries who could hardly speak any English.

Around ten-thirty things started picking up in the English section. Five or six people suddenly started browsing through the course books and Lucy had a job seeing which books they were looking at. One man pulled four or five course books off the shelves and headed for the till. He was so quick that Lucy hadn't had a chance to write down the books he'd chosen.

By the time she'd got to the till, the shop assistant had put the books into a bag, so there was only one thing she could do, namely ask him to show her which books he'd bought.

He wandered over to another section, so Lucy cornered him there and

politely asked him which books he'd just bought.

'Why?' he'd demanded to know.

'Because I'm trying to find out which level of EFL book sells best,' Lucy told him.

'Well, it's none of your business,' he snapped at Lucy.

Lucy wondered whether he might change his mind if she gave his stupid little moustache a tug, but decided it might also lead to her being thrown out of Hugendubel.

She decided to let him go and returned to the English section again.

Just as she arrived a man pulled a course book off the shelf and stuck it in a Hugendubel bag.

A shoplifter! Lucy thought.

Sure enough the man walked past the till and began disappearing down the stairs.

Lucy dashed after him and confronted him. 'You haven't paid for that book,' she said,

'Of course I have,' he said and tried to push past Lucy.

'Oh no, you haven't,' she said as her fist hit him firmly in his solar plexus and he fell to the floor gasping for breath.

A crowd quickly gathered and one of the managers appeared.

'What's going on here?' he demanded to know.

'He tried to steal a book' Lucy told him. 'No, I didn't,' the man gasped, 'I bought the wrong level yesterday, so I brought it back and changed it for the right level, but then she attacked me.'

'Shit!' Lucy thought as she was escorted out of Hugendubel.

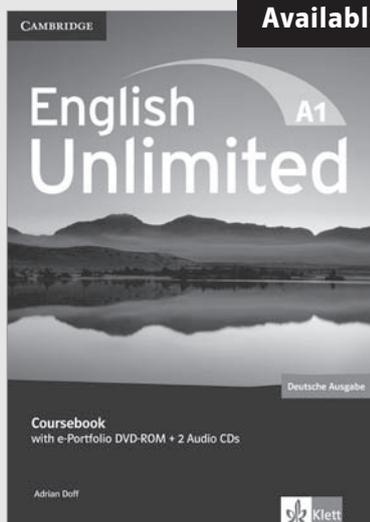
To be continued

Where can English take you?

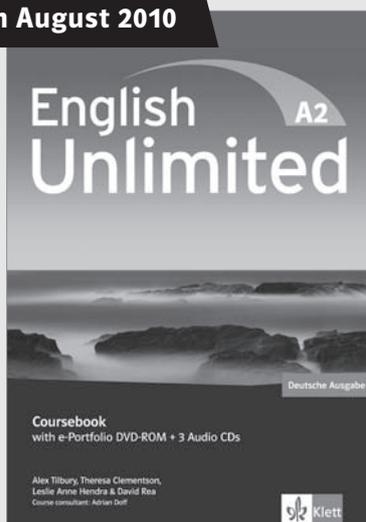
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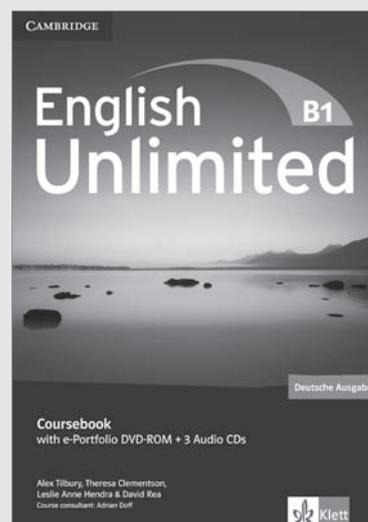
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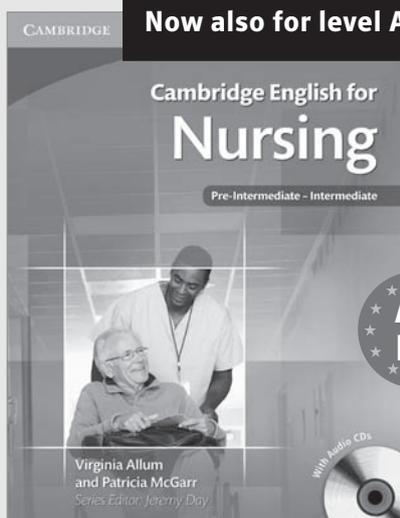
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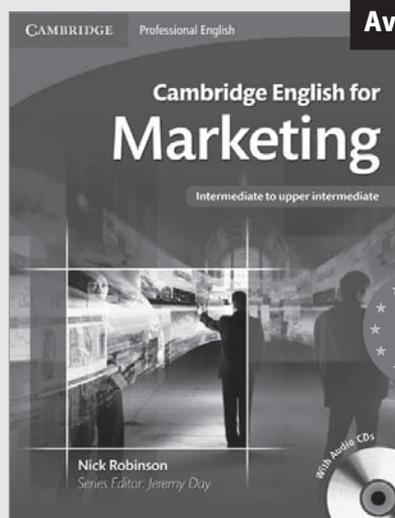
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