

Letter from the NileTESOL President

Dr. Marilyn Plumlee, Associate Professor, Department of Applied Linguistics, AUC



MARILYN PLUMLEE, NILETESOL PRESIDENT

As 2014 draws to a close, we of NileTESOL can look back on a year of successful expanded services to our members while looking forward to new initiatives as more members step forward, volunteering to take on responsibilities to provide support and services to our growing membership from governorates all over Egypt.

Among expanded services of 2014 were

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Letter from the Editor

Susan Esnawy, Senior Instructor, Dept. of English Language Instruction, AUC

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the latest issue of the NileTESOL Newsletter. This issue brings you a variety of articles in different sections, from reports on the NileTESOL 2014 Conference to articles on best teaching practices and professional development. Each section includes very interesting contributions to keep you up-to-date with the current practices in the field. "Reports on the NileTESOL 2014 Conference" presents several interesting sessions attended by participants and the ways in which they tried to apply the new ideas in their teaching contexts. In "Reflections on NileTESOL 2014 Conference," Fatma Hafez reports on two sessions. In the first one, Yasmine Salah El-Din described the several types of activities for which she used Face-book in her EFL/EAP



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the full day Professional Development workshops held outside of Cairo in Port Said and Tanta in the Spring and in Alexandria in the Fall. Each of these sessions was well attended by NileTESOL members from those areas. In early 2015, following the annual conference on January 26-27, thanks to funding provided by the RELO office at the U.S. Embassy for an extended stay in Egypt by the RELO-sponsored invited conference speaker, Dr. Leslie Opp-Beckman, we are looking forward to being able to provide workshops in Dhahab as well as in either Luxor or Aswan and perhaps in Kafr el-Sheikh. You will be receiving notification of these workshops via email once the details have been finalized.

In 2014 NileTESOL was also able to continue allocating grants to members from beyond the Cairo-Giza area for professional development by attending local and international conferences, enrolling in online courses offered by TESOL International and in offline courses offered by the School of Continuing Education of AUC. Written reports and oral presentations to an audience composed of other awardees and members of the grants committee by the 2014 awardees highlighted the value of these grants to their recipients. NileTESOL is pleased to be able to offer similar grants in 2015 and all members will be receiving the relevant announcements in due course via email.

I am also pleased to be able to announce that a new and improved web page for NileTESOL is currently under development. We will be announcing the 2015 target launch date of the new web page at the conference as well as through email channels, so stay tuned. What is important for you to know now is that in order to update membership records and to integrate members' affiliation and mailing information accurately when the new web page is launched, you will be asked to register as a current, active member via the membership option on the new web page. (The policy of no-fee-for-membership will still be in effect.)

Looking forward to new initiatives for 2015, it has been brought to my attention several times over the past year that there is a strong desire for more professional development opportunities in even more governorates than it is possible for the professional development committee to offer on a regular basis. On the model of what has happened in numerous TESOL affiliates in other countries around the world, if you are interested in seeing more NileTESOL professional development workshops in a location near you or if you would like to see a forum for teachers in institutions similar to your own, I encourage you to network with peers and colleagues to create a regionally-based or topic-based Special Interest Group (SIG), a procedure which was provided for in the "SIG amendment" to the NileTESOL constitution which was adopted at last year's annual General Assembly on the last day of the conference. For example, a SIG could be created to deal specifically with issues affecting "primary school teachers" or "teachers of young learners", or "teachers at language schools", or "teachers at

governmental schools". Other ideas for SIGs include one specifically devoted to mutual support in launching Action Research projects within one's classroom or institution, or a SIG to help teachers develop their formal presentation skills for academic papers presented in English. Not every meeting of a SIG needs to be held at a specific time at an offline location. Asynchronous online discussion groups or synchronous video meetings can be held to allow people from various locations to participate in the activities and conversations.

You may be asking yourself what it takes to start a SIG and whether it will involve a heavy time commitment. The time commitment is for you to determine and for the procedures involved, it's not that complicated, as you will see from the basic steps specified in the NileTESOL constitutional amendment of 20 January 2014, the most important points of which I am excerpting for your reference here. (You can consult the NileTESOL Constitution online under "Section III. COMMITTEES" for full details of the provisions of the amendment):

1. SIGs shall present a Statement of Purpose and a set of Bylaws to the Board of Directors for approval.
2. Once a SIG is organized it must provide a proposed action plan to the Board of Directors within two months after the Board of Directors approves its establishment. Thereafter, SIGs shall provide an annual report as well as periodic updates on their activities to the Board of Directors at the discretion or request of the president of NileTESOL.
3. NileTESOL will support SIGs in the following ways:
 - by providing free publicity of its activities through NileTESOL channels of information such as its mailing list, website and information space in the NileTESOL newsletter;
 - by encouraging membership of SIGs in various ways;
 - by allowing SIGs to have space in which to meet at the NileTESOL Annual Conference.

So if you are a motivated, committed NileTESOL member who has identified a need that can be addressed through networking with colleagues and if you are willing to assume the leadership in establishment of a SIG, talk up your idea to your NileTESOL colleagues and I encourage you to use the networking opportunities of the upcoming January 2015 conference to identify yourself and your idea to colleagues you meet in the various sessions. Once you have established a nucleus of interested persons, the group needs to confer to draw up a Statement of Purpose and a set of Bylaws, with specific goals for the first year of projected activities of the proposed SIG. Finally, these documents should be submitted to the president of NileTESOL or to any other member of the Board of Directors for approval of the new SIG. The Board meets regularly every month, on either the first or second Tuesday of each month of the academic year. Once the SIG is established and approved by the Board, its leaders and members together run its affairs,

organizing sessions either online or offline at intervals that suit the needs of the members.

As outgoing president, it has been my honor to serve you and throughout the coming year in my role Past-President, I will continue to be involved in NileTESOL and its mission by providing continuity and support for the new President and President-Elect of NileTESOL. As many of you undoubtedly already know, President-Elect Waleed Nureldeen had to resign from his position when he moved abroad last fall to take up a new teaching position overseas. This therefore necessitates electing both a new President and a new President-elect at the upcoming General Assembly. I look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming NileTESOL 2015 Conference and I urge you to attend the annual General Assembly (which is the constitutionally-mandated annual business meeting of the organization to which all members are convened).

The 2015 General Assembly will be held on the second afternoon of the conference, on Tuesday, January 27th, from 1:00-1:45pm. Since the annual General Assembly is held during the annual conference and thus offers a venue for face-to-face personal interaction, it is a good opportunity for any member to raise any topic that they would like the Board to consider during the upcoming year. Other agenda items for the General Assembly include reports by the members of the Board of Directors on the 2014 activities of the committees under their responsibility and their plans for 2015. This year, in addition to conducting elections for the new officers of the organization, the Board has an amendment to the Constitution to submit for membership approval. Members of the Board who are rotating off the Board at the end of their terms of service will also be given certificates of commendation.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Editor of this newsletter, Susan Esnawy, as well as Rania Jabr and Susanne Rizzo, members of the newsletter editorial board, for a terrific job in shepherding this newsletter from conception to final production. Many thanks go as well to Yasmin Noman, who heads the grants committee, and to all the members of the Board of Directors for their energetic involvement in ensuring the continuation of all NileTESOL's activities. Amira Erfan, who has taken over the leadership of the Professional Development committee following Waleed's resignation, deserves special mention. Finally, a word of gratitude goes to the institutional supporters of NileTESOL for their dedication and active involvement and funding in support of the mission of the organization. Those four institutions are the British Council, AM-IDEAST, the Regional English Language Officer of the U.S. Department of State and the American University in Cairo, School of Continuing Education. Each of these institutions designates a representative to attend the meetings of the Board of Directors and each of these representatives has faithfully given their input on all the issues facing the Board throughout 2014.

With best wishes to all NileTESOL members for a successful and productive 2015 and looking forward to seeing you at our annual conference on January 26-27, 2015!

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class, and the advantages and drawbacks of using this method. In the other, Sophie Farag showed the audience how to create “word clouds” and how to use them in class to develop the four skills.

Kariman Mohsen praises NileTESOL for adding poster sessions to its types of presentations in “The First NileTESOL Poster Session.” She used her board game as a poster and explained to her audience how she used this game to promote speaking skills and the use of target forms and structures in her classroom.

In “Grammar and Movie Clips/ 20x20 Presentations/TEA SIG,” Maha Hassan describes interesting sessions she attended at the conference. In one presentation,

Ragia Magdeldin described how she used short movie clips from famous movies and cartons to teach grammar rules. Dalia Helmy, in her 20x20 Presentation, showed how she used Facebook in her class to foster teacher-student and student-student communication and learning in written English. Lastly, Hassan reports on the Testing Colloquium whose

purpose was to launch the first Special Interest Group (SIG) of NileTESOL, namely the “Testing, Evaluation and Assessment” (TEA) SIG.

Professionals in the field share with you in “Best practices from the classroom” teaching methods applied successfully to take directly to your own classroom.

Susanne Rizzo, in “Critical Friendship Circles,” describes the role of each student in the circle and the steps for using these circles in the classroom to give feedback on oral presentations and writing tasks.

In “Quotation for Motivation,” Lubna Adel Sherif presents several interesting techniques of using quotations, to practice and enhance learning of the different language skills as well as to add an element of fun to the classroom.

On another note, Hala El tony, in “Private Schools and 21st Century Challenges,” describes the challenges that these schools face in training the teachers in using contemporary methods and resources to enable them to apply these methods in their classrooms, which would equip the students with the characteristics and skills necessary for dealing with and succeeding in the

contemporary world of today.

In “Professional Development,” Susanne Rizzo and Heba Fatehelbab, co-chairs of the NileTESOL 2015 Conference, invite you to attend the conference.

Rania Jabr encourages young professionals in the field to add to their professional development by “Presenting at International Conferences.” She offers advice on when to start, where to look for ideas and the necessary points to take into consideration while writing the conference proposal and the presentation.

I would like to thank the other members of the NileTESOL Newsletter Editorial Board, Rania Jabr and Susanne Rizzo, for their efforts and editorial skills.

I hope you will enjoy reading these interesting and useful articles!





REPORTS ON THE NILETESOL 2014 CONFERENCE

Reflections on NileTESOL 2014 Conference

Fatma Aboel Soud Abdel Hafez, English Instructor, Al-Azhar University

NileTESOL's Conference is a great opportunity for teachers to share experiences, activities, ideas and materials. I consider myself lucky to have attended this conference for the last three years. I have certainly benefitted greatly from it. For example, I learned about using poster sessions at last year's conference, and I carried over the idea to my teaching situation where I required my students to create their own posters. They loved this activity and learned a great deal from it. This year, I attended two amazing workshops, which I will elaborate on.

The first workshop that I attended was called "Using Facebook in an EFL Context" by Yasmine Salah El-Din. First, she spoke about the benefits of using Facebook in an academic context, namely breaking the monotony of the regular teaching/learning process. It makes students feel more comfortable in class. In addition,

it enhances collaboration between students and teachers and also engages students outside the class. Moreover, it is less formal than regular teaching contexts, which helps students to become more motivated to complete the assigned tasks, and it could serve as an alternative to classes during unexpected situations. The workshop also provided samples of the activities that can be done by either the teacher or the students. For example, the teacher can post short passages to read or YouTube videos to watch prior to discussing a particular topic (and invite students to do the same), and a summary of problems with students' compositions to look at before they come to class; s/he can also post assignments on a daily basis and jokes, quotes, cartoons or puzzles related to language. In addition, the teacher can ask students to identify language errors in a post and give them the chance to grade each other's work. On

the part of the students, they can post their work, ask questions, respond to the teacher's and each other's questions, and give each other feedback on their work.

What I liked most in this workshop was that the presenter discussed the benefits as well as the problems of these activities. For instance, they teach students responsibility since they assume the teacher's role, which enhances their self-confidence. They also gain experience by examining their colleagues' work, which helps them to assess their level in comparison to others. On the other hand, the presenter gave examples of the problems that teachers might face with these activities, such as lack of time for checking all feedback given by students, students' distrust of their colleagues' feedback, and the lack of anonymity in the feedback, which could be inhibiting for some. The presenter con-



cluded by saying that Facebook can be a useful tool in TEFL, given effective planning, since it adds an element of fun to the learning process. This workshop was very useful and enjoyable since it gave me ideas to add some fun to my class from time to time, especially with a tool like Facebook, now popular among several age groups.

In my teaching context, all students are faculty members of Al-Azhar University. They are always in a rush to the center where they learn English, which is located on campus after giving long lectures in their own faculties /schools. With their hectic schedules, it would be a nice change of pace if the teacher decides to teach English via Facebook. That is what encouraged me to lead a workshop on this subject with my colleagues at Al-Azhar University. I wanted to know what others would think about it and see if we could come up with new ideas for using Facebook in our teaching context. Some of the teachers liked the ideas, while others did not, citing that they do not prefer to use technology in classrooms mainly because it is a trend now, and they think that it is unnecessary and time-

consuming. Instead, teachers can add an element of fun through designing activities that urge students to move and interact more inside the classroom using the target language without the use of technology. I think both opinions are viable, and it is up to the teacher to decide what works best with the type of students s/he has.

The second workshop I attended was called "Word Clouds: How to Create and Use them in Class." by Sophie Farag. This workshop was more practical, allowing the audience to learn and apply step-by-step the suggested technique with the presenter. What I liked about this workshop was that the presenter suggested a variety of uses for this application. For example, in vocabulary, students brainstorm many words associated with a certain topic and the teacher creates a word cloud. It can also be used to review vocabulary by displaying a word cloud of that week's vocabulary or spelling words. In reading, it can be used as a warm-up in which the teacher creates a cloud of the students' guesses about the main idea or title. As a post-reading activity, the teacher can also create a word cloud of two readings on

the same topic and ask students to match each word cloud with the correct reading or compare the two readings. In speaking, it can be used for storytelling. In writing, it allows students to see which words are repeated in a given paragraph because they appear bigger. In grammar, teachers can create a word cloud of irregular verbs and parts of speech, for example. What I liked most about this workshop was that it offered something useful and fun for all ages.

In conclusion, learning a language is intimidating for students and difficult for teachers, so whenever there is a chance for teachers to get together to share ideas and materials to help each other develop professionally, it is an opportunity to be seized, and this is what NileTESOL Conference provides.





The First NileTESOL Poster Session

Kariman Mohsen, Teacher Assistant at Thebes Academy, English Instructor at Spread Your English, Educational Manager at CLT Academy



When the NileTESOL organizing committee came up with the idea of introducing poster presentations for the first time in its conference, I decided to use the idea in my classes. I have tried to use posters or board games to encourage students to speak in class. When it proved its success, I applied to be a presenter and share my idea in NileTESOL conference, 2014.

I discussed an important and

challenging issue that most teachers face in their conversation classes which is how the teacher can turn the class to be completely student-centered even if the students are feeling too stressed and shy to speak. I didn't explain my idea in the poster, but instead I preferred to use "Realia" to make it easier for the audience to understand. That's why I brought my board game and used it as a poster. Different colorful mice were used with interesting and crea-

tive questions, matching the objectives of the lesson. Each student will throw the dice to know his question. Students should compete to answer correctly and accumulate more groups of colorful mice exactly like a Monopoly game. The idea is how to use games to encourage students to speak and apply target forms while working as one group, and at the same time, depend on themselves. Moreover, having the title "Navigating A Way Forward:



Innovating And E-Novating In TESOL” encouraged me to add more than one skill could be added to the poster and class, but in international conferences as well. This was clear in introducing poster sessions in the NileTESOL 2014 conference.

"Technology" to my poster or practiced. I discovered that simplicity is one of the most effective ways of teaching not only in your board game, which is one of the most important advantages of the game as it makes it adaptable. Any kinds of questions





Grammar and Movie Clips/ 20x20 Presentations/ TEA SIG

Maha Hassan, Head of English Dept. at Arab Academy for Training & Technology, Founder of Maha ESL Training Community

Attending the NileTesol Conference is always a pleasure for me. I adore professional development sessions wherever they are.

On the first day of the conference, I attended an interesting session called “Grammar Tips with Movie Clips” by Ragia Magdeldin. Grammar has always been a tough subject to deal with. It has and is still causing troubles to many teachers. A teacher needs to be competent enough to help students understand and perhaps become interested in learning it. Many teachers have used timelines to explain tenses; others have used class activities and recently a lot of computer activities and games. Yet, Magdeldin introduced a new idea from

www.moviesegmentsstoassessgrammargoals.blogspot.com to interest us as well as students in teaching and learning grammar. This Blog depends on short extracts from famous movies and cartoon films to teach grammar rules. With each ex-

tract, there is a pre-activity, which is a short introduction or warm up to the rule being explained, an activity in the form of a worksheet to be filled by the students while watching the extract, and finally a post activity discussing the rule, consolidating its use and perhaps asking students to give more examples or solve an additional exercise.

The extracts are taken from well-known, popular films. This, itself, is a privilege that is tempting enough to both students and teachers. Magdeldin showed two extracts and distributed two worksheets to work on while watching the videos so as to see the kind of activities the students can do while watching the clips. It was a short, but a very interesting session.

A few days after the conference, I had to give a short training session to a number of English teachers. I explained to them the importance of Communicative Language Teaching

(CLT) and I used two famous extracts from this blog, *Monsters University* and *The Last Samurai* as examples of how to teach “should and shouldn’t / Using Adverbs”. The teachers were both interested and astonished by the idea. They really enjoyed it and were more convinced of the importance of CLT.

Interactive teaching is a deep well that never stops flowing with ideas and surprises to interest both students and teachers in the learning process to attain miracles!! Thank you Ms. Magdeldin and thank you NileTESOL!

On the second day, in an exciting 20x20 presentation, Dalia Helmy spoke about her experience with her university students of making a special account on Facebook to communicate with her students, receive assignments, and send comments and instructions. I have also used Facebook with my adult students (age: 20 – 35). I have two groups, intermediate and upper intermediate levels.



They browse the internet to find useful information and links on grammar, vocabulary or interesting videos in English to post for the group to benefit their peers. They only communicate in English. Sometimes, I give them an assignment to write a short diary which I correct. For the upper intermediate level, I post links to certain books, such as "The Alchemist," which I have asked them to read and prepare presentations on in groups.

Later in the day, I attended the Testing Colloquium, with Deena Boraie, Hanan Khalifa, Atta Gebril, Deborah Healey, Elizabeth Arrigoni and Marilyn Plumlee. The main issue was to form the first Special Interest Group (SIG) of NileTESOL, namely the Testing, Evaluation and Assessment (TEA) SIG, by bringing together people interested in "issues pertaining to language testing and assessment". During the session, the

presenters tried to give us a clear idea about the issue of testing and assessment and its importance in developing ESL teaching. This topic has gone through much debate recently around the world, and it seems that the presenters wanted to involve us in the debate as well. They spoke about the difference between Evaluation and Assessment and clarified the misconception that they were one and the same. Evaluation is done by higher level supervisors, while assessment can be done by the teacher himself/herself as well as by the supervisor. The teacher can assess how far the new way of teaching or the set curriculum has benefited the students and how much progress they have achieved. For sure, it is a great idea to invite teachers and teacher trainers to introduce this idea to schools and train teachers in how to apply it step by step for the benefit of students. Traditional methods of assessment

have become archaic, and it is time we start using new ideas and methods.

During the session, the panelists gave brief talks about the nature of assessment, the development that took place in this field, and the ways in which it can be applied in schools and universities. They also spoke about its importance in helping experts in setting curricula in a much better way to suit students and our modern age. As I have always been interested in research and believe in the importance of teacher-researcher, I was very much attracted to the topic and hope we would be able to do some good work on it in the near future.

The session ended with interested teachers adding their names to a list in preparation for the official steps to launch the TEA SIG.

Thumbs up NileTESOL!!





BEST PRACTICES FROM THE CLASSROOM

Critical Friendship Circles: An Effective Method for Feedback

Susanne Rizzo, Senior Instructor, American University in Cairo

Feedback is a method widely used for improvement and development. Yet, it is a challenge not only for instructors to provide to students but also for students to give each other and utilize effectively. First of all, it must be comprehensible. Here, it is important to be clear and make sure that the language can be understood. However, if the feedback is perceived as shocking or hurtful to the person, the individual may be unable to receive it; thus, the language used when commenting is of particular importance. Some other considerations when giving feedback include timing, the amount, and other cultural issues. Its effectiveness is negatively impacted when it is given too late or is too direct or indirect; including too much is overwhelming. If these factors are ignored and students are not properly trained to handle feedback, it could leave instructors and students dreading the process and thinking it is a waste of time.

The Critical Friendship Circle (CFC) is a way to address these issues. A CFC is a group of students that critiques the performance or work of their peers using a specific protocol. It combines the caring aspects of a friend and the evaluative aspects of a critic, and creates the supportive environment necessary to discuss suggestions for improvement. By formalizing the process, everyone knows the rules of the game and can play the roles of “critic” and “friend” in the appropriate way and at the appropriate time (Wachob, 2011).

In a CFC, there is a facilitator (the course instructor or one of the students), the presenter(s) (the student(s) whose performance is being evaluated), and the friends (the remainder of the class). One of the friends is chosen as a note-taker. The participants in the CFC form a circle and begin a simple, four-step process, led by the facilitator, which takes around 10-12 minutes to complete and includes two types of feedback. The steps are described below:

1. **Presentation/Questions (2-4 min.):** The presenter(s) is part of the circle and assesses his/her own performance indicating what went well and what could have gone better. Then the facilitator leads the question portion where friends are given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification. After this section concludes, the presenter(s) leaves the circle and may only listen, staying close and taking notes from the feedback sections to respond to later. Two types of feedback are given by the friends: warm and cool. One of the friends in the circle also takes notes to be given to the presenter(s) upon conclusion of the CFC.
2. **Warm Feedback (2-3 min.):** The friends discuss what they thought went well in the presenter's performance. This stage is aimed at reassuring the presenter(s) on successes, using language such as:



"I really liked the way _____ organized _____..."

"In my opinion, the materials were well suited to..."

"I think the presenter did a good job in..."

The presenter(s), who is outside of the circle, listens and takes notes.

3. Cool Feedback (2-3 min.): The friends discuss what might have gone wrong, if connections were missing, and what the presenter(s) could do better for next time, using language such as:

"I believe _____ might have considered..."

"Perhaps the _____ were not clear enough. Maybe next time the presenter(s) could..."

It would have been stronger if the presenter(s)..."

The presenter(s), who is outside of the circle, listens and takes notes.

4. Wrap up and Challenge (2-3 min.): The facilitator, with help from the friends, summarizes the discussion. Based on what was learned in the discussion, a challenge is set for the next presenter(s). The presenter(s) comes back to the circle, thanks the friends and says what was the best advice or comment and what s/he agreed or disagreed with. The note-taker gives the CFC notes to the presenter(s).

While I used this technique in a teacher training course where students, in pairs, took turns preparing a lesson based on a topic from our textbook in teaching the class, it can be adapted for oral presentations as well as reviewing essays. It is important to do several practice rounds as well as generate phrases as a class for giving both warm and cool feedback. Students struggle with providing suggestions for improvement, so having enough positive, encouraging phrases students can use for cool feedback is especially important, as they are embarrassed to do so otherwise. It is also essential to remind the class of the language that was agreed upon for deliver-

ing cool feedback. In addition, because repeated use of the CFC could become routine for the students, it can be varied by having different students play the role of the facilitator.

For the most part, having the structured stages of the CFC helps students stay on the path to progress within a positive atmosphere. CFCs balance warm and cool feedback to prevent the presenter(s) from feeling overwhelmed. Having the presenter(s) out of the circle but close listening, with an opportunity to respond later, helps create distance and block his/her emotions from taking over. S/he can better receive the feedback and articulate a reply

in a calm manner. Many students praised this method in their reflections about the course. They felt they were really helping and encouraging each other, indicating that the CFC aided in creating a feeling community. In this way, CFCs develop students' ability to give and receive feedback in a helpful and supportive way with the focus being on listening, reflection and having the appropriate language to both deliver and receive feedback.

References

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Quotation for Motivation

Lubna Adel Sherif, Assistant Lecturer, The British University in Egypt (BUE)

The Buddha once said “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.” What makes a student ready? What makes the teacher appear? The key success factor in making students ready to learn is motivation. The teacher never appears at his/her best unless the students are motivated. The practice of motivation begins with a smiling teacher telling the students “Good morning”, and ends with a genuine “Thank you” for students’ correct responses. Many teachers care much about being resourceful to help their students to learn, yet very few realize that motivation is the secret key factor in the two-way process of learning and teaching.

How many times were you stuck in traffic telling yourself “time is money”? We often tend to use quotations and proverbs as such in our daily conversations even if we do not plan to. Realizing the importance of quotations as a means of linguistic and cultural transfer, Dr. P. Dhanavel, Assistant Professor of English at Anna University, used quotations with his engineering students during the period from December 2002 to April 2003 to encourage them to learn better.

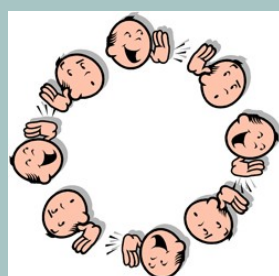
The following is an adaptation of Dr. Dhanavel’s technique in using quotations as a tool to motivate students to learn in a way which serves the intended objectives and outcomes in an ESL/EFL classroom:

Skill	Description of the Activity	Learning Goals
Reading & Listening	<p>1. Teacher writes a quotation on the board relevant to the theme of the lesson. Students are asked to list 8-10 words they expect to hear/read in the lesson. Teacher writes students’ responses on the board and discusses them.</p> <p>If the lesson is about health, then the teacher can write the following quotation: <i>An apple a day keeps the doctor away.</i></p> <p>2. Teacher prepares a list of quotations cut into halves. Students are divided into two large groups or groups of 4; each is assigned one half of the quotations. Groups visit other teams to complete quotations. The winner completes more quotations than others. Teacher discusses the quotations at the end.</p> <p>One of Dr. Dhanavel’s suggested quotes is: <i>Imagination is more important than Knowledge.</i> <i>—Albert Einstein</i></p>	<p>1. Raise students’ energy level during a warm up activity.</p> <p>2. Introduce new vocabulary.</p> <p>3. Help students to predict.</p> <p>4. Develop critical thinking skills.</p>



Skill	Description of the Activity	Learning Goals
Writing	<p>1. Teacher divides students into pairs; each is handed a quotation. Students are asked to use this quotation either as a topic sentence for a paragraph or as a writing topic.</p> <p>For example: <i>To travel is to discover that everyone is wrong about other countries. –Aldous Huxley</i></p> <p>2. Teacher divides students into pairs. S/he then asks each pair to paraphrase a quotation (convey the message of the quotation in their own words). It is better if the quotations the teacher assigns to the students have a theme.</p> <p>If the theme is about goals and achieving targets, students can be asked to paraphrase the following quote:</p> <p><i>Whenever you want to achieve something, keep your eyes open, concentrate and make sure you know exactly what it is you want. No one can hit their target with their eyes closed. – Paulo Coelho.</i></p>	<p>1. Identify the main idea of essays/paragraphs.</p> <p>2. Write a paragraph/essay effectively to communicate an idea.</p> <p>3. Follow the standards of academic writing.</p>
Speaking	<p>1. Teacher writes a quotation on the board. Students are asked to comment on the quotation by stating their opinions, describing a situation, referring to the causes or the effects of a certain phenomenon.</p> <p>If the theme of the class is to discuss the students' experiences with languages and learning languages, the following quotation will be of interest to urge the students to share their experience:</p> <p><i>To have another language is to possess a second soul.</i> –Charlemagne.</p> <p>2. Another variation is to assign each student a quotation or to assign a quotation for the whole class. They are allowed 2-3 minutes to deliver a mini-presentation on a situation which happened in their lives whereby the previous quotation fits.</p> <p>3. As an extension to the previous activity, students can ask the presenter questions, or relate to the presenter's situation with one of their own.</p>	<p>1. Speak fluently on a variety of topics.</p> <p>2. Explore ideas and promote understanding.</p> <p>3. Use language more effectively to communicate ideas.</p>



Skill	Description of the Activity	Learning Goals
Vocabulary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Dhanavel uses quotations to introduce new vocabulary: the sense of the word (meaning of the word), word relations (synonyms & antonyms), word form (affixation & part of speech). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher writes the following quote on the board: <i>Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever. –Gandhi.</i> The teacher then asks the students to find a word and its antonym (live-die). If the target is to identify the part of speech, the teacher can assign the students the following quotation: <i>A teacher who is attempting to teach without inspiring the pupil with a desire to learn is hammering on a cold iron. –Horace Mann.</i> The teacher then asks students to find different forms of words, e.g. TEACH, and identify the part of speech. The teacher can extend the previous activity by asking students to create sentences using these words. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use vocabulary in context. Develop correct sentence structure. Improve spelling.
Pronunciation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher selects quotations which include commonly confusing sounds. Students repeat the words after the teacher. The following quote is of interest: <i>She sifted seven thick-stalked thistles through a strong, thick sieve. –Logue.</i> Students can also play the telephone game where each whispers a short quotation to the student next to him/her till the end of the class. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire the correct pronunciation of commonly confused words. 

Quotations can change the daily routine of the classroom and make students more motivated, especially when one quotation can generate a lot of fun. Let us do it!

Note:

Based on a paper by Dr. P. Dhanavel, Assistant Professor of English at Anna University
<http://www.usingenglish.com/articles/quotations-for-motivation-in-esl-classroom.html>

Quotations are compiled from:

<http://www.usingenglish.com/articles/quotations-for-motivation-in-esl-classroom.html>
http://www.myenglishpages.com/site_php_files/proverbs-by-categories.php#.U8N-yJSSyf8
<http://voxy.com/blog/index.php/2011/04/inspirational-quotes-for-language-learners/>
https://www.learnthat.org/pages/view/literacy_quotes.html
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/12/magazine/12FOB-onlanguage-t.html?_r=0



Private Schools and 21st Century Challenges

Hala El tony, Nile TESOL Board Member

Recently, private and international schools have become a main concern for parents in the Egyptian society. Parents are after excellence in education not easily found in governmental schools. They seek internationally accredited school certificates that will provide a strong educational foundation and create knowledgeable learners who will fulfill the demands of the job market. Their concern is derived from the desire for a comfortable and respectable future for their children.

Private and international schools in Egypt face different challenges that stand in the way of achieving their innovative educational goals. As our world changes and develops rapidly, our minds and ways of thinking change too, as well as those of the students. The minds of the new generation of young learners have developed with extensive exposure to technology and accessibility to the world. Our young learners are now smarter and more creative, yet also hyperactive and easily bored.

This puts an extra load on teachers whose efforts attempt to engage students in the learning process but allow them to have fun while encouraging them to love learning. Private sector students who are well off and open to all kinds of developments in many fields at a young age are even more challenging as they have different expectations of the learning process.

Another major challenge that private and international schools are facing is overcoming the exam-oriented culture, of the students and their parents, in which learning quality and efficiency are measured by high scores on exams, regardless of whether the students have attained any of the learning objectives and new skills. This acts as a hindrance for communicative and interactive learning approaches whose base is on a collaborative learning process for acquiring knowledge rather than passing exams. Furthermore, focusing on addressing the needs of learners, according to their individual learning styles, and de-

veloping students' autonomy become very limited.

This character building and fostering learners' self-initiative is a major characteristic of private and international schools. Egyptian students lack the self-awareness of their abilities or talents and, therefore, grow up with no self-confidence or understanding of their points of strength and weaknesses. Such awareness enables them to set goals and plan for their lives with a clear vision of what they want. This requires a very well developed curriculum that works on the different learning styles of students and provides various interactive character building and self-awareness activities.

Private and international schools are trying hard to meet the needs of the students as well as their parents in various ways. Therefore, they are thirsty for the latest updates in the field of education related to teaching, lesson planning, assessment, classroom management and teaching approaches. They also need to equip teachers with the most updated and



innovative approaches that best achieve such a high quality of education. The need for interactive learning has increased the integration of different subjects in a collaborative learning process. Cross-curricular approaches are applied now in many schools and have proven effective in developing critical thinking.

Furthermore, the more our students are technologically oriented, the more teachers need to incorporate technology into class activities. This requires an advanced knowledge in using computers and creation of in-

teresting activities in a way that best serves educational goals. Professional development sessions and workshops are highly needed in this regard; training teachers in how to develop their own materials as well as providing them with different resources, where they can find different activities and ideas, has become essential.

Finally, international educational associations often target governmental teachers and their educational needs, forgetting that there is also the private sector with the money, but not the guidance to best invest

it in developing their teaching approaches and curricula, to improve the whole educational system and make a difference in our society.

Thus, these are the challenges parents face in choosing the best educational opportunities for their children. While private and international schools seem to be better equipped for the educational needs of today, they still have their own struggles that should be considered. Only with proper leadership and direction can these types of schools truly succeed in offering the best education for our children.





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Invitation to Attend the 2015 NileTESOL Conference

Heba Fathelbab & Susanne Rizzo, co-chairs

It is to our great pleasure to invite you to attend the 19th Annual NileTESOL Conference which will be held on January 26th and 27th, 2015, at the New Cairo Campus of the American University in Cairo, Egypt. The theme of the conference this year is *"Creative Communities: Inspiring Teaching and Ownership of Learning."* In the spirit of this year's theme, we have added two exciting new events: E-Community and Teaching Without Tech. Whether you are tech savvy or do not have access to technology, consider sharing your knowledge and expertise with others in a brief 20-minute presentation focusing on either useful websites and software, or teaching with minimal resources. Due to their success from previous conferences, we are also happy to be continuing the 20x20 session as well as the poster session. Along with the concurrent sessions, for the upcoming conference, we are planning to celebrate teaching and learning by preparing special panel discussions and a colloquium of experts in TESOL on diverse topics related to the conference theme. We will also fly well-known contemporary TESOL plenary speakers to Cairo to share with you their most current experience in teaching and learning.

The annual NileTESOL conference is distinguished not only for its new and innovative events, but also for the TESOL Symposium that was held on January 27, 2014, in honor of Dr. Deena Boraie, the first Egyptian TESOL President of TESOL International 2014. The Symposium was organized by the NileTESOL Organizing Committee (OC) in partnership with TESOL International and was a great success. The members of the Organizing Committee have been working very hard since the last day of the NileTESOL 2014 Conference on planning and organizing a successful 19th NileTESOL Conference in 2015. In addition to the overwhelming success and massive turnout for the conference in recent years and amidst all the political and social challenges in Egypt, we have new and innovative ideas for professional development opportunities for all language professionals in Egypt and abroad that are not to be missed!

Finally, we would like to thank all the members of the OC, the NileTESOL President and Board of Directors, SCE and last but not least, all NileTESOL members, without whom NileTESOL Conferences would not be as successful and effective as they are every year. Please see the flyer for more conference information. We look forward to seeing you there!





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NileTESOL is the International TESOL Affiliate and IATEFL Associate in Egypt

www.niletesol.org

Conference website

<https://sites.google.com/a/aucegypt.edu/niletesol2015/>

For further information:
skillsconf@aucegypt.edu

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Presenting at International Conferences: A recipe for successful professional development

Rania Jabr, Senior Instructor, The American University in Cairo, Egypt

My passion for attending conferences started more than a decade ago. I was still a Teaching Fellow at The American University in Cairo, Egypt, and I was given the golden opportunity to attend and present at TESOL International. I had conducted a study on using phrasal verbs by Arab speakers, and my professor encouraged me to submit it to this highly esteemed conference. I could not believe it when I was accepted. My work is of value!

Even after attending and presenting in conferences on all continents, I still feel excited when my proposal gets accepted. It is a feeling of achievement and success. As past conference chair and member of the proposal reading team of three international conferences, I can tell you that many others share the same feeling.

However, let me back track and share the steps that are tried and true. First, you need to attend as many conferences as you can. This means that you should dive in and attend as many sessions as possible. After a number of years, yes “years”, you are ready to venture into

the presenters zone. It is not easy as it may seem. It is a huge responsibility. Remember your audience are coming to learn something “new”. They come from varied backgrounds with different learning experiences. You need to capture all this in a 45-minute session in which you “educate” them.

I am not trying to scare young, budding presenters; rather, I am shedding light on expectations. From a long list of sessions and a long list of presenters, countless individuals decide to attend your presentation (one, two, ten, one hundred); as a result, you have to rise to the occasion and present. Even today after presenting numerous presentations, I feel the need to excel. Colleagues would forewarn me and say that they are coming to attend my session. Conference attendees who know me from past presentations in previous conferences would mark my session and tell me that they are planning on attending, too. I cannot fail them. I have to meet their high expectations.

My advice is to only present when you are ready and up to the challenge. So, what do you need? An idea with a twist.

Times have changed and the wide horizons that the Internet offers have resulted in a feeling of “been there... done that”. You are then faced with two options: either to repeat what everyone else has tackled hundreds of times or to create your own niche. Do not worry. No need to look far. Look into what *you* do on a daily or weekly basis. See what makes your teaching different or your own. This is what you should share: “*This is how it works in my class.*”

Vetting conference proposals is not an easy task. For every conference, proposal reviewers read hundreds, if not thousands, of submissions. The reality is only few stand out. These are the ones that have the secret ingredients: being concise, precise, informative, and innovative. This is what both attendees and conference organizers are looking for, so are you up to the challenge? I encourage you to not spend the next ten years sitting in the audience taking notes. I am sure you have one or more great ideas to share. Prepare yourself. It’s time to take the stage.



NileTESOL is a professional association for all those individuals who are actively involved in the development of the teaching of English and in teaching content in English in Egypt and globally. NileTESOL operates as a part of the English Studies Division of the School of Continuing Education at the American University in Cairo through a Board of Directors from the EFL community in Egypt.

Find us at www.niletesol.org

Interested in attending the 2015 Conference? Go to <https://sites.google.com/a/aucegypt.edu/niletesol2015/>

NileTESOL Newsletter Editorial Board: Susan Esnawy, Rania Jabr, Susanne Rizzo, AUC-Department of English Language Instruction

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