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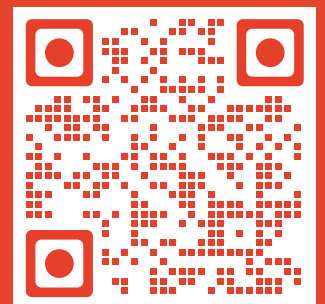
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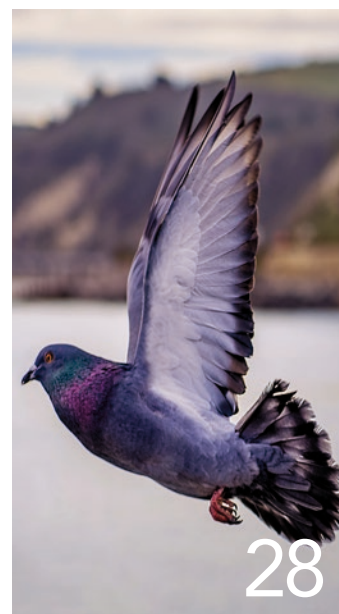


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Putting on our own oxygen mask

We often talk about the care and wellbeing of students, but can we look out for them if our own needs are not being met?

The year is coming to an end. Days are getting shorter and we're all scrabbling to get those little tasks finished before the holidays officially kick off. If you're feeling the crunch at the moment, you're not alone! But now is as good a time as any to talk about self-care and looking after your mental health.

This issue, we're exploring positive mental wellbeing for both our students and ourselves, from the top, all the way down. How can we put on our own mask before assisting others with theirs, so to speak?

Well, for teacher trainer, Giovanni Licata, the answer may lie in leadership and management style. On page 28, Giovanni discusses the concept of 'spillover', and asks if poor teacher wellbeing could have its roots at the top. Leaders take note!

“What can institutions and teachers do to prevent the burnout of their staff?”

What about practitioners who may already be struggling with their mental health? Some may feel they have to sacrifice their mental wellbeing in exchange for their passion for teaching, but Educator, Andrew Theophilou says this shouldn't be the case. What can institutions and teachers do to prevent the burnout of their staff? Have a look over on page 26.

For those of you looking for the next step in your teaching career, our Special Supplement starts over on page 17! We are looking at the top Masters courses in English, Education and Linguistics. These include our worldwide top ten, alongside our detailed UK QS rankings to help you choose the best Masters for you. Which institutions are you expecting to see on top this year?

If you're looking for a more niche career change, fly over to page 24, where CEO of Mayflower College, Paul Stevens, tells us all about teaching Aviation English.

Lastly, if you're a facts and figures geek, go to page 14 for our BONARD special feature where Ivana Bartosik takes us through the worldwide post-COVID travel trends.

Enjoy your winter issue and Happy Holidays from all of us at the *Gazette*!

LAUREN BILLINGS, EDITOR



Where did Melbourne fall in the rankings?

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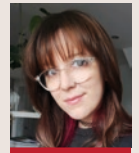
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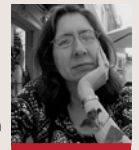
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The company you keep

Disabled teacher wins case against school, but who owes him the money?
Melanie Butler reports...

A Bournemouth language school, United World School of English, was found responsible for disability-related harassment, constructive dismissal, and wrongful dismissal on 2 October this year. The company, United World School of English Limited (UWS), was ordered to pay £22,000 to Mike Long who had taught at the school for 20 years.

According to the Union, 'When the school underwent a change of ownership, Mr Long became concerned that the new owners brought a culture of pressure and intimidation. As Mr Long has suffered from depression and lives with anxiety, he raised his concerns that the actions of the new owners were impacting his condition.'

The *Gazette* can bear witness to Mr Long's state of mind. He reached out to us in 2021 on a number of issues including the new contract he had felt pressured to sign.

We checked on the government register of businesses, Companies House, and found that the original company, United World School of English 2 Limited (company number: 04649886) had ceased trading in 2019.

A new company, United World School of English (12278482), had been incorporated that October. Then, on 16 December 2020, the 100% shareholding previously held by Maria Isabella Morgan had been transferred to The Language Training Co Dorset Limited (07540981) of which she was majority shareholder. UWS had become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Language Training.

The matter of company ownership again raised its head earlier this year when, after a two-year campaign, involving public action from both the TEFL Union and Disability campaigners, the case of M Long v United World School of English Ltd came to court.

The first judgement in the case, sent to both parties on 25 April, dealt with Mr Long's disability. It reads: 'The Claimant was a disabled person as defined by



section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 at all material times [...] The impairment is Anxiety.'

Shortly afterwards, on 15 May, a Confirmation Statement was posed at Companies House, recording the transfer of 100% of the shares from Language Training to Maria Isabel Morgan agreed in December 2022. UWS was listed as 'non-trading'.

In September, when the final hearing took place, UWS had a new legal owner. The Tribunal found in favour of Mr Long and ordered UWS to pay him £22,000. According to the Union, 'United World claimed insolvency immediately prior to the judgement.'

At the time of writing UWS have not filed for insolvency, though its insolvency practitioner assured us that the matter was in hand.

On 22 October, we raised the ownership issue with Maria Isabel Morgan. She replied, 'I have two businesses registered on Companies House in my name [...] Please do not tenuously link my other company The Language Training co. into this situation. It is completely irrelevant.'

Under English law, however, the question as to whether a respondent is a wholly-owned subsidiary of a parent company may be relevant to the question of who is liable to pay. In 2021, the UK Supreme Court ruled that a parent company can be held liable for any failings in a

subsidiary's Duty of Care, where the parent company played a role in managing the operations. The parent's liability depends on 'what its directors knew or ought to have known; and what action was taken or not taken.'

While not yet insolvent, United World School of English is in no financial position to meet the court order to pay. Its latest accounts uploaded on 30 October show cash in hand or at bank of £2153 and debts totalling over £144,000.

Had Language Training still been the parent company at the time of the judgement, Mike Long could have taken them to court. Its last company accounts shows £264,585 cash, and assets, net of current liabilities, of £838,752.

Note that, according to the records at Companies House, the decision to switch ownership was made well before the tribunal began and this legal path now seems closed.

The Union's lawyers remain confident they will succeed in obtaining the payment.

Mike Long himself has a different priority: "The money doesn't matter to me. I just wanted the management of the school to realise how important the understanding of mental health issues is.

'Hopefully, others that suffer in similar ways, can take some solace in the fact that it's worth the fight. I've come out of it with my head held high and a reaffirmed belief in my future.'

Stop Press!

On 30 November, a Voluntary Liquidator was appointed for United World School of English Ltd, according to Companies House. According to the Statement of Affairs, also lodged at Companies House, the company had zero assets and owed £166,000 to four creditors as follows:

Lloyd's Bank	£36,926.21
Michael Long	£22,282.93
Maria Isabel Morgan	£3607.68
The Language Training Co Dorset Ltd	£103,359.92.

On Google Maps, a private language school known as [The Language Training Co.](#) is shown as currently trading at Brandon & Clifton House, 44-46 St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, previously the location of United World School of English. A photograph on the listing of a barbecue dated September 2023 with a sign reading 'United World School of English' clearly shown on the building confirms this.

The TEFL Union has confirmed to the *Gazette* that its lawyers still expect to obtain at least part of the money owed to Mike Long.

Remembering Philip Prowse

Alan Maley reflects on the life of Philip Prowse.

Philip, who died recently, will be remembered by all who knew him as someone who made many valuable contributions to ELT.

As Director of the Bell College in Saffron Walden in the 1970's and 80's, he ran a highly complex institution with a relaxed, yet watchful – and, above all, caring – way. He was deeply committed to less privileged regions of the world; in particular to Africa.

Following his departure from Saffron Walden, he worked on the Education Writers' Group of the Society of Authors. He was tireless in his defence of authors' rights, and in promoting their publishing careers.

He was a passionate advocate of the key role of extensive reading, and became the series editor of the highly innovative Cambridge

English Readers. These titles aimed to provide learners with engaging stories, written in authentic English, without the constraints of word and structure lists. He constantly encouraged contributors to write simply and accessibly from an intuitive understanding of learner levels.

Unsurprisingly, given his commitment to extensive reading, he was also one of the key founder members of the Extensive Reading Foundation, helping to establish frameworks for the organisation in its earliest stages. He was closely involved with the establishment of the [Language Learner Literature Awards](#).

As Reviews Editor of the ELT Journal, he took a proactive role in the books to review, ensuring that less well-known titles and authors were given an airing. As

such, he was highly influential [on thinking in our field](#).

Concurrently, he began a long and productive writing partnership with Judy Garton-Sprenger, publishing a string of highly successful coursebooks.

In his 'retirement', he had begun to establish a reputation as the author of a series of spy-novels. Three titles were published: Hellyer's Trip, Hellyer's Coup, and the recently published Hellyer's Line – all rompingly good reads! Philip prided himself on the authenticity of his overseas settings, based on his earlier postings with the British Council in places like Egypt and Greece. These novels are all fast-paced, racy, action-packed narratives, with intriguing plot-lines that keep the reader guessing. I am sad to be deprived of his next book in the series.



Philip made a great contribution to our profession. But he was also a man with a great sense of humour, a zest for life, a highly developed sense of social responsibility, and a generous capacity for friendship. I shall miss him greatly, and I am not alone.

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Tales as old as time!

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READERS

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Authorship

Projects with purpose: writing for children boosts language learning and wellbeing.

The experience of authorship in a book project boosts wellbeing, self-efficacy, and motivation of language learners, according to a study by Riccardo Amorati and John Hajek at the University of Melbourne, Australia.

The project at the heart of this study follows the principles of the Deep Approach to World Language Education, as well as the EMPATHICS model of wellbeing. The Deep Approach to World Language learning proposes that students' learning experience should be personally meaningful and socially engaging, while the EMPATHICS model highlights the role of emotions, empathy and autonomy.

The students in this study were 21 native English-speaking Australian undergraduates taking upper-intermediate/advanced Italian during 2019-2020.

The 'I am an author' project sought to combine these approaches and test their effect on student outcomes, such as wellbeing. Students were instructed to write and illustrate a short story in Italian. These books were to be self-published and some would be selected to be given to Italian children, thus addressing a real social need; resources for Italian-speaking children in Australia are scarce.

As well as reflective commentary on their experience of the project, students also answered a 21-item Likert scale questionnaire based on the EMPATHICS model to assess emotion and empathy ('the project improved/enhanced my mood') motivation ('the project made me more optimistic about the value of language learning'), perseverance ('the project increased my motivation to persevere in language learning'), meaningfulness ('I liked that I could show what I know by producing something meaningful for others'), and wellbeing ('the project made me reflect on my capacity to rise to a challenge').

The phrasing of these questions does not leave much scope for expressing more neutral, negative experiences, and could



have been reworded to be less leading. Fortunately, data was also collected from answers to open questions, which were more neutrally phrased to elicit a fuller range of responses, such as: 'Did you experience any positive or negative emotions while working on the project/please explain.'

While the questionnaire scores indicated overwhelmingly positive experiences, it is the responses to the open questions that really illustrate the student experience of this project. For example, 'It gave me a glimpse into the potential practical outputs that could be achieved through learning a language, beyond merely being able to engage within the classroom' and 'To see a published piece of work in my own name that was created entirely by me was extremely fulfilling.'

The satisfaction and positive emotions experienced by students undertaking this project had several components which could tap into different sources of personal motivation and well-

being. On the one hand, this kind of project offers a great deal of autonomy and creativity and questionnaire responses indicated improvements in students' self-image associated with seeing themselves as 'authors'.

On the other hand, the additional context of writing for a real-world audience, that can benefit from the books, adds a dimension of connectedness, community and meaningful purpose that is seldom associated with educational tasks.

The key elements in designing projects of this kind to support both wellbeing and language-learning appear to be autonomy (freedom of choice with regard to some, if not all, aspects, such as topic choice), challenge (but in the Goldilocks zone; not too much, not too little), and community engagement (the very effective extra ingredient that this particular project incorporated).

In this study, students were young adults at upper-intermediate or advanced level, but projects like this are highly adaptable to all levels. 'First books' for very

young children could be prepared by elementary students. These simple books can be printed and stapled together as a form of 'self-publishing'. For students that might struggle more with aspects such as autonomy and creativity, there could be an option to work in pairs or groups.

Although there is a great deal of satisfaction to be had from holding a physical book in hand with your name on the cover, other digital outputs could also be considered, as well as a range of other creative outputs such as comics, podcasts, short films, drama and games. In all cases, the extra key ingredient is an audience outside the classroom that can genuinely benefit in some way making language learning a more meaningful experience.

REFERENCE

■ Amorati, R. and Hajek, J. (2023) *Fostering well-being in the university L2 classroom: the "I am an author" project. International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching.* doi/10.1515/iral-2023-0051

EFL teachers' enjoyment

Supportive schools make teachers happier and more effective.

School climate is a stronger predictor of teachers' enjoyment than self-efficacy or wellbeing, according to a recent study by Lawrence Jun Zhang, Jalil Fathi and Farnooosh Mohammaddokht at the University of Kurdistan, Sanandaj, Iran.

In line with a movement towards 'positive psychology', which looks for positive influences such as what is going right rather than wrong, Zhang *et al* set out to examine how well EFL teachers' enjoyment could be predicted by assessing three aspects of their experience: perceived school climate, self-efficacy and psychological wellbeing.

Teachers' perception of their school's climate was measured using the 21-item 'School-level Environment questionnaire (R-SLEQ)', which asks about collaboration (co-operation and team-work), student relations (are they positive, respectful and trusting?), school resources

(materials, technology and support), decision making (are teachers involved?), and instructional innovation (is there support for new approaches?).

Self-efficacy was measured using the 24-item 'Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)' that asks how competent and effective teachers see themselves in different aspects of their teaching practice.

Psychological well-being was measured using the 25-item 'Index of Psychological Well-Being at Work' which investigates feelings of competency, involvement and recognition and whether they feel valued and appreciated.

Teaching enjoyment was measured using the nine-item 'Foreign Language Teaching Enjoyment Scale (FLTES)' which assesses how teachers' rate their personal enjoyment from teaching, whether they feel appreciated by their students, and how well they enjoy their social interactions in the classroom generally.

These questionnaires were answered by 335 EFL teachers (188 female and 147 male) at language institutes and schools in Iran.

Using structural equation modelling, while higher scores on all three scales positively predicted teachers' enjoyment, perceived school climate was found to be the strongest direct predictor of teachers' enjoyment, as well as also influencing self-efficacy and wellbeing. Wellbeing was also influenced by self-efficacy.

That school climate, self-efficacy and well-being all predict enjoyment is hardly surprising, but what is interesting in this study is the relative contributions made, both directly and indirectly. Teachers who felt competent and effective were more likely to enjoy teaching and have better psychological wellbeing; but having better psychological wellbeing did not predict better competence, or self-efficacy.

Positive psychological wellbeing directly predicted enjoyment,



however, supported by self-efficacy and a good school climate.

But the biggest predictor overall was perceived school climate, suggesting that a co-operative and supportive working environment is the best way to promote teaching competence, wellbeing and enjoyment.

REFERENCE

Zhang, L. J., Fathi, J. and Mohammaddokht, F. (2023) Predicting Teaching Enjoyment from Teachers' Perceived School Climate, Self-Efficacy, and Psychological Wellbeing at Work: EFL Teachers. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* <https://doi-org.explib.cam.ac.uk/10.1177/00315125231182269>

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L1 in multilingual classrooms

In this article, Hamish Chalmers analyses the evidence for multilingual classrooms.



Attitudes to the use of L1 in the L2 classroom is an area of contradiction. Think back to when you first started to learn a foreign language; if, like me, you grew up in the UK, your foreign languages classes were probably characterised by lots of English use, while you wobbled your way into a comfortable relationship with French or German. You will have been given translations of key words. Your teacher may have used English to explain grammar rules. This will have persisted throughout your formal instruction.

However, if you grew up somewhere else, your experiences of learning English might have been different. You might have been at an international school, where the only language you heard your teachers use was English. Your playgrounds and corridors were probably decorated with signs that read, 'Please Speak English'. You might have been praised when a teacher heard you speaking English with your friends and told off when you weren't. If this feels like a double standard, that's because it is.

Both standards are not without plausible rationales; grammar rules, for example, can be tricky to understand at the best of times, let alone when they are explained in a language you have not yet fully mastered. Using the L1, therefore, can be argued to expedite meta-linguistic understanding.

International school communities are often composed of learners representing a multitude of different L1s, none of which may be shared with their teachers. English, therefore, can act as a lingua franca, levelling the playing field and encouraging teachers to make accommodations for emerging English proficiency a routine part of their practice.

Plausible rationales are an insufficient basis on which to inform policy, however. Whether and how the L1 can be brought to bear on the education of language learner children, and what the outcomes are likely to be, are empirical questions; questions that can be illuminated by research evidence.

Some of the strongest arguments for L1-inclusive approaches come from research on bilingual schools where the curriculum

is delivered in both the L1 and the target language. Several systematic reviews have analysed the evidence from multiple studies on their effects. All converge on the same general finding: children who attend these schools tend to develop similar levels of proficiency in the target language as their peers who attend target-language-only schools. Importantly, however, they also tend to develop high levels of proficiency in their L1s, including proficiency in academic registers. In most cases, attainment in curriculum subjects is comparable to that of children at target-language-only schools, and sometimes better.

The explanation for this lies in the theory of linguistic interdependence, first suggested by Canadian applied linguist Jim Cummins in the 1980s. Cummins posited that there is a 'central engine' that drives linguistic proficiency in all languages. That is, assuming plentiful opportunities to use and develop both, knowledge of the world gained through one language will transfer to the other. For example, if a child has been taught about

the properties of 2D shapes in one language, they do not need to re-learn those relatively abstract concepts in the other language, just the labels – side, angle, apex – that we use to talk about them.

Language learning is not merely about collecting words, but also about developing the conceptual understanding of what those words mean. It makes intuitive sense that providing opportunities to do this in both languages (especially if one is stronger than the other) opens up more routes to securing that understanding.

This understanding of how the bilingual brain handles different languages, and the positive findings from evaluations of bilingual schools, has naturally led teachers and researchers to consider how this might be translated into the context of non-bilingual schools.

Research into how the L1 might be brought to bear on the education of emerging multilinguals in such contexts is less clear. Much research has focused on how children feel about using their L1s in target-language schools, rather than on objective measures of linguistics or curriculum development.

The small body of research that does focus on the latter suggests sometimes it can help and sometimes it does not make much of a difference. For example, one approach that appears to be helpful is providing L1

translations of key words during reading activities. This is especially helpful for children with a strong L1.

Another promising approach involves encouraging children to compare linguistic conventions between the target language and the L1. For example, in French the noun comes before an adjective, in English it comes after. This seems most effective when conventions differ; where the act of comparison makes these differences more salient and thus better remembered.

An approach that seems not to make a difference either way is to encourage children who share an L1 to discuss their work in that language in preparation for a task where only the target language is used. Here the L1 is thought to support the process of engaging in educational tasks, freeing up cognitive resources to concentrate on the products of those tasks. Ultimately, the implications of the evidence on L1 use in target-language-only schools vary by context. However, we can say with some confidence that it can be helpful and is very rarely detrimental.

It is my personal view that English medium schools, in which the student body is largely or entirely made up of speakers of the same L1, should consider developing fully bilingual programmes. The evidence is clear that children leave these schools with well-developed multilingualism and good

curriculum understanding that will serve them well in whatever language becomes their most frequent medium of communication in later life.

Teachers in other school-types should not be afraid to bring the L1s of their students into the classroom. Providing L1 resources such as word lists, and encouraging meta-linguistic understanding through language comparison exercises is likely to help those children with strong L1 backgrounds. Encouraging children to discuss their learning in whatever language they are most proficient in seems likely to reduce cognitive load.

In all cases, a welcoming attitude towards the L1 can act as a marker that the school recognises and values the multilingualism of its students and the role it plays in the linguistically diverse world that they are growing up in.



Hamish Chalmers is a lecturer in applied linguistics and second language acquisition at the University of Oxford. Before that, he was a primary school teacher and Director of English as an Additional Language at a large international school in Bangkok, Thailand.

Melanie's tips:

How to use L1 in the classroom...

1. Word lists

Rather than giving older students in a multilingual classroom an already translated word list, you can provide them with a list of English words they will need in the next lesson, alongside an example sentence. Ask them to come back to class with an L1 translation of both the word and of the example sentence.

Why use an example? Because words – especially colloquial rather than academic or technical ones – often have more than one meaning and may have more than one translation in another language, or even none at all.

Take the verb 'to pack'; its translation is a problem in all Latin languages but particularly in French, a language which shares up to 56% of its vocabulary with English. For the noun 'packing' Google translate gives you the French word 'emballage', or 'wrapping'. The French 'put' their shoes in a suitcase but 'wrap' them into a box. As for packing a football stadium, they 'fill it until it cracks'.

By asking students to translate the example sentence alongside the key word, you can train them to think carefully about what an English word means in a particular context and not to just grab the first entry in their bilingual dictionary.

2. Linguistic conventions

Collocation is a seemingly universal convention, but learners often fail to notice collocational differences. This even happens with fixed phrases. From the age of six, I knew the English phrase 'nothing to do with' became 'nothing to see with' in my L2 (French). But it took me 40 years to notice that in my L3 (Spanish) it became 'nothing that see with'. Nor was it till I started writing this tip that I noticed that Nada (nothing) + que (that) + verb is a consistent pattern in the Spanish language.



How to get your students to notice these things? When doing a class on collocations – or even when introducing one or two – put each key word along with any of its collocations you are teaching on the board with an example sentence. Then, get the students to give you a literal translation in English for all the sentences. Put all those that are completely different to the English version up for students to see; a celebration of multilingualism!

Language is the main way we express our identities, desires, culture... everything that makes us who we are.'

At Optimist International School (OIS), we believe that creating a nurturing and intellectually stimulating environment, where every child feels a sense of belonging, is essential for their holistic development.

However, when a child's strongest language doesn't align with the language of instruction, it can present severe challenges and lead to feelings of isolation and exclusion. According to Dr Jim Cummins' research, developing basic communication skills, like social language, takes six months to two years, while cognitive academic language proficiency may require five years or longer. This can adversely affect a student's motivation and overall development if we, as their educators, don't offer them ample opportunities to express themselves.

Even though English serves as our primary language of instruction, we actively embrace and celebrate our students' and teachers' linguistic diversity. We integrate translanguaging techniques, allowing students to use their languages flexibly for both communication and academic purposes. Translanguaging, a concept delineated by García, creates a bridge between their prior life experiences and learning, capitalising on their existing knowledge. We are committed to reflection, updating policies, and incorporating translanguaging approaches to make language instruction more inclusive and visible. This ensures students develop a solid foundation in all their languages, enhancing their lifelong language skills.

Here are some of our key strategies:

1. Attitude

Our attitude is key to our approach. Can we communicate with children who speak no English? Of course we can. They can speak fluently in different languages, they have rich knowledge in a different language, all we need is to connect with them, and use some translation tools along the way. By acknowledging their language wealth as an asset, we make it our mission to effectively communicate with and support all children, irrespective of their English proficiency. We recognise that children possess a wealth of knowledge in their native languages, and it is our duty to tap into that knowledge and help them cultivate it.

2. Languages are visible everywhere

Language diversity is evident throughout our school, from classroom to corridors. We utilise bilingual and multilingual resources, integrating languages into all subjects; multilingual vocabulary walls, maths symbols in different languages and systems, differences between punctuation marks in different languages are just some of the examples. Moreover, every start of the year we create our Language Profiles to share how we are connected to our different languages in different circumstances and levels.



Embracing multilingualism

*How might schools incorporate multilingualism effectively? Multilingual Learning Specialist, **Valentina Spyropoulou** explains the methods and techniques used in her school.*

One of our most valuable resources is our multilingual library, with a continuously expanding collection of multilingual books.

3. Technology and translation tools

Technology and translation tools come to the rescue, even if sometimes, the translation result is not exactly accurate. We train our students and teachers to use a variety of translation tools with confidence, to allow

communication, access to the curriculum, and independence in learning.

4. Children use their chosen language in class

We collaborate with our Multilingual Specialists to support language development, assessing knowledge and skills irrespective of the language used. When a child knows how to write a description



using figurative language and ambitious adjectives, it only needs to be translated for us to see their skill.

Students are encouraged to use their preferred language for their work and research, utilising various translation tools as needed. Our specialists also support children in comparing their languages by drawing similarities and differences, a technique which helps children gain a deeper understanding of how languages work. Additionally, students 'buddy up' with those speaking the same language, allowing for free knowledge exchange. This approach ensures a rich supportive environment where language is a bridge not a barrier to learning.

5. Multilingual projects

We design projects aligned with the curriculum that require students to create content in multiple languages. This approach deepens their appreciation of linguistic

diversity and allows them to feel that their languages are not only welcome, but also an integral part of the learning process.

6. Teacher training

OIS invests in teacher training programs led by external experts and our Multilingual Learning Specialists, with the aim of deepening our colleagues' understanding of multilingualism and how to effectively apply these principles in the classroom. We promote a culture of shared learning, fostering collaboration and idea exchange through platforms like Padlet.

7. Parental involvement

Parents play a vital role in our approach. We engage them in pre-teaching basic vocabulary and concepts, where children take home lists of words, phrases, and concepts to discuss in their preferred language. This preps the children for class

discussions, making them feel at ease to participate and learn. Furthermore, parents are encouraged to provide materials in their languages, such as audiovisual resources and books, which are incorporated into our Online Multilingual Library.

Our Parent Volunteers committee is another valuable avenue, allowing parents to initiate or participate in a range of activities within the school, from reading support to celebrating languages and cultures. We recently celebrated our first Language Friendly School and Cultural Day, organised by parents and supported by teachers. This event featured activities in over 22 languages, including reading sessions and cultural activities, all performed by the students.

8. A certified language friendly school

OIS is proud to be part of the [Language Friendly Schools](#) community. Language Friendly Schools are schools that have developed a language plan involving all members of the school. It is a plan that is adapted to the school's own needs and aims at creating an inclusive and language friendly learning environment. It also allows for many networking opportunities with schools around the world, Erasmus projects, and a Language Friendly School Academy with paid and free courses on how to be Language Friendly.

The results of our efforts are evident in the increased confidence, enhanced social skills, greater ability to take risks, academic excellence, and progress through English as an Additional Language (EAL) frameworks, such as The Bell Foundation EAL Framework, or others. Dr Jim Cummins' research reminds us of our school's mission: to empower our students to excel in their home and additional languages. It underscores the importance of nurturing strong proficiency in all languages, not just English. This goal is achieved through the regular practice of translanguaging both in the classroom and at home.

Optimist International School is a public international primary school based in The Netherlands. They have been a Language Friendly School for over three years now. If you are curious to find out more about how you can incorporate multilingualism into your classroom, just get in touch.



Valentina is an educator who is very passionate about understanding her students' needs and talents, and supporting them to fulfil their true potential. She has worked in Greece, UK, and The Netherlands, within various roles and environments, where she has gained valuable knowledge and experience. Valentina is currently a group teacher and Multilingual Learning Specialist at Optimist International School.

On the move

BONARD's Ivana Bartosik and international education experts discuss travel trends for English language learners, post-COVID.

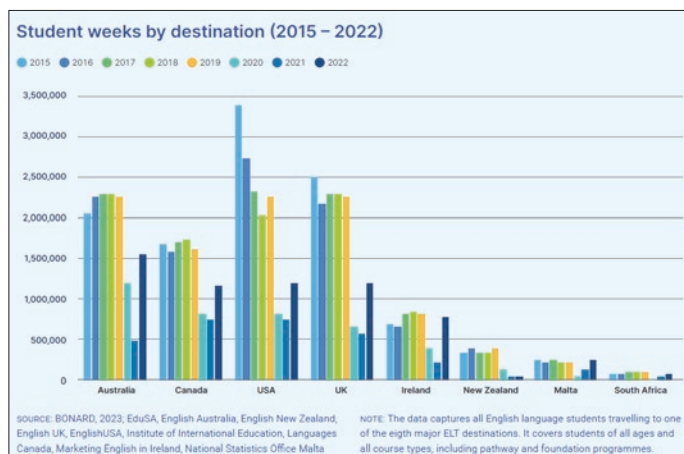


U neven recovery across destinations in 2023 continues as the ELT Travel sector emerges from the pandemic crisis, shaped by new trends.

Looking back at the now seemingly distant past, 2022 brought mixed recovery. The return to English language student mobility was built around three main challenges: capacity issues, such as teachers, accommodation, flights, as well as visa application workload; ongoing restrictions in key markets; and increased costs.

As an established model, BONARD's annual research into the global ELT sector spans eight destinations – Australia, Canada, Ireland, Malta, New Zealand, South Africa, the UK, and the USA – and serves as a comprehensive performance benchmark for the sector. The figures given are based on student weeks. This is because, in a sector where students can enrol in language centres for between four days to an academic year, or longer, this gives a more accurate picture of the student income per market.

Destination benchmark: obstacle race with mixed results



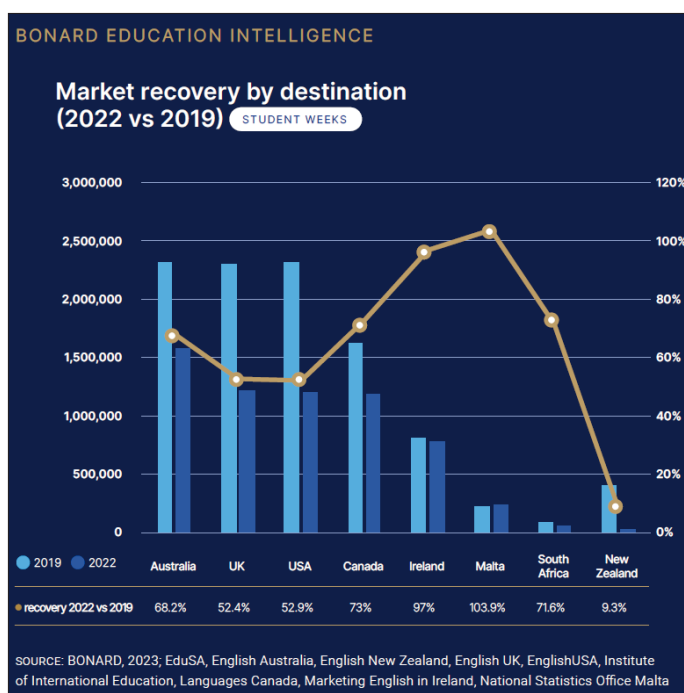
Source: BONARD, 2023.

In 2022, the sector recovered 63% of its pre-pandemic student week volume and 55% of its student numbers. However, recovery was not uniform, and varied on a destination-to-destination basis.

In terms of absolute numbers, Australia registered the best performance, followed by Canada, which enjoyed a robust Q4 in 2022. While in 2021 Canada was the best-performing study destination, accounting for the largest number of student weeks spent, complications with visa processing in the second half of the year prevented Canada from achieving a more positive recovery in 2022. Visa processing times and grant rates are key factors that will determine Canada's standing in 2023.

The UK also registered an impressive increase in the number of student weeks between 2021 and 2022, but it still has a long way to go to reach its 2019 market volume. With a limited recovery from some of its key source markets and Brexit redirecting some students to other ELT destinations, the country reached 53% of the pre-pandemic situation.

The recovery for the USA was slower in 2022 compared to other major destinations. In 2022, the USA welcomed 70,579 students, which represents 52% of its pre-pandemic volume. The USA saw a decline in numbers even before 2019, and factors such as long visa processing times and visa denials hampered growth.



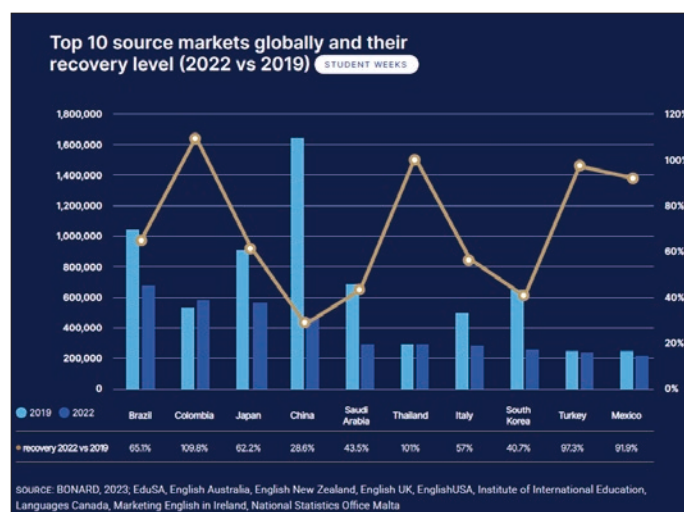
Source: BONARD, 2023.

editorial@elgazette.com

Conversely, Malta and Ireland enjoyed a strong rebound in 2022. In fact, Malta was the only destination to outperform its 2019 levels, while Ireland was very close to achieving this significant milestone, recording a 97% recovery.

Source markets ranking: LATAM going strong, while Asia slowly recovers

Dr Ivana Bartosik, BONARD's International Education Director, explains, "The global sector is reconfiguring, with markets in LATAM growing fast and other traditionally strong source countries which the sector relied upon – such as China and Italy, for example – being slower than expected in their recovery. BONARD's data, which provides a power ranking of the 90 largest source countries in the world, points to some important shifts in the global landscape.



Source: BONARD, 2023.

Key highlights

Latin America showed the greatest rebound, recovering 87% of its 2019 student weeks in 2022. With the exception of Brazil, the largest markets in the region (Colombia, Chile, Argentina, Peru, and Ecuador) registered impressive growth between 2021 and 2022, and fully recovered their 2019 market volume. Initial data for 2023 points to continued growth from the region, mostly to Australia and Canada.

Japan outperformed China to become the largest market in Asia. China dropped to the 4th spot as a result of the travel restrictions, which were only removed earlier this year. The rebound in group travel, in particular, is expected to manifest itself in summer 2024.

The return to the new normal in Italy lagged behind other EU markets. The country only reached 57% of its pre-pandemic volume, which was far below the European average of 80%. Italy is the largest source market for junior students. The market has continued to gradually recover in 2023; however, it still lags behind the other European markets and has not reached its pre-pandemic volumes.

Turkey posted impressive year-on-year growth, which resulted in a 97% market recovery. Strong demand for English abroad continued to translate into bookings throughout the first half of 2023.

Ivana Bartosik, PhD, is an International Education Director at BONARD. She specialises in bespoke market reports applying both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Over the course of six years, she has worked on numerous projects for associations, education agencies and individual education providers providing data-driven guidance.



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Professional development

Ranking the top Masters courses



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Creating the **global** rankings

Before you read on, make sure to have a look at how the university rankings are put together – **Melanie Butler** explains...

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How you can take your career to the next level

All *Gazette* rankings depend on publicly available information. Whenever the *Gazette* does a UK ranking, whether for Masters or Language Centres, the cry comes back to rank other countries. In terms of Language Centres, we can't; aside from France, no national accreditation system publishes the detailed results of inspections.

The same is true when it comes to research; the UK government Research Excellence Framework (REF), known to all as that which examines research submitted in 34 specified areas across the country, does the trick. We compile our own data on which TEFL-related Masters submit research under each category and can check that lecturers on the Masters list have submitted research to the REF. But this only covers the UK.

There are several international university rankings we could use. However, only QS compiles a ranking by subject. This gives most weight to Academic Reputation, which together with reputation among employers makes up 50% of the overall score. A further 20% is given for citations; they take the number of times research from these departments are cited in top-ranked international journals and divide them by the number of academic staff. Academic staff to student ratios makes up a further 20%. If it's research excellence you are looking for in a Masters, then the REF may be a better guide, at least for the UK, but reputation is also very important, especially when it comes to finding a job.

Our job is to check which of the universities are listed under the two main TEFL-related subject areas on the QS rankings – Linguistics and Education – to strip out all those listed which do not offer appropriate Masters, usually for Applied Linguistics (AL) and TESOL. Many of

the Canadians, though, use the term TESL. Additionally, both Oxford University and the Ontario Institute in the Study of Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto offer AL and Language Teaching, which cover more than just English.

We limit our choice to English-medium degrees but not necessarily in English-speaking countries. In our Top 10 (page 19) we list the best English-medium universities for both Linguistics and Education. For our UK REF-based rankings we also check under English Language, but we simply do not have enough data on the research area of individual university departments outside the UK to do that here.

Many of the top-performing universities listed under Linguistics by QS do not offer Masters in a TEFL-related field. The trend is to offer only a five-year Combined Masters and PhD programme, though most do have a short four-week style certificate course on offer for new teachers. There are a few more US Colleges offering relevant degrees in Education departments, not least because one-year Masters are still the norm in schools of Education.

One good thing about doing rankings by subject is that you can pick out the universities which, though not super famous globally, are particularly strong in this area. The University of Hawai'i at Manoa, for example, is not listed under the QS top 300 universities overall but it come in the top 20 globally for Linguistics and is fifth in our Linguistics list.

The British just pip the rest of the world to the post in Education, with UCL's Institute of Education – deemed best in the world by QS – at the top, and arch-rival, University of Oxford, second. Edinburgh is the only British institution to appear both for Education and Linguistics. There are two Americans in the list: Columbia University and the University of Michigan. Meanwhile, the OISE carries the flag for Canada, and Monash for Australia.

The honours in Linguistics are pretty evenly spread geographically. There are two British Universities in the lead, followed by both universities in Singapore and one from Hong Kong. Australia comes in with two, the US and Canada have one each, and we have one from Europe's master linguists – the Dutch – run by the University of Leiden.

The most extraordinary link among our top Linguistics departments, however, is not geographic at all. Three institutions – Hong Kong U, Macquarie and Lancaster – have the same founding father: the late Professor Christopher Candlin.

Continuing on from our worldwide unis list, we have this year's full UK and Ireland QS rankings. These include, where applicable, their REF scores. For more information, take a glance at page 20. As always, happy reading!



Worldwide top 10

The top universities for Linguistics and Education.

Linguistics	Education
1. University of Edinburgh , UK (4)	1. Institute of Education, UCL , UK (1)
2. Lancaster University , UK (10)	2. Department of Education, Oxford University , UK (5)
3. National University of Singapore , Singapore (=12)	3. OISE, University of Toronto , Canada (7)
4. University of Hong Kong , Hong Kong (=12)	4. Department of Education, University of Hong Kong , Hong Kong (8)
5. University of Hawai'i at Manoa , US (19)	5. Teachers College, Columbia University , US (9)
6. University of British Columbia , Canada (20)	6. Nanyang Technological University , Singapore (11)
7. University of Melbourne , Australia (26)	7. Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh , UK (13)
8. Macquarie University , Australia (27)	8. Marsal Family School of Education, University of Michigan , USA (13)
9. Nanyang Technological University , Singapore (35)	9. Monash University , Australia (10)
10. Leiden University , Netherlands. (36)	10. The Education University of Hong Kong , Hong Kong (21)

The rankings are taken from the QS Ranking by Subject 2023. It lists the top ten English medium programmes we can find offering a TEFL-related Masters which feature in either the QS list for Linguistics or Education. The assigned number in brackets refers to their position in the QS global ranking. Since we have had to search all the university websites individually, it is possible that we missed some institutions. If you feel your department has been wrongly left out, please contact editorial@elgazette.com.

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How to read these rankings

The rankings of the UK and Irish Masters on these pages is based on the QS score, but QS scores below the top 100 are all given in 50s (101-150, 151-200) so we have put all unis in the same QS band in the same colour, alternating between white and yellow. In one case, the University of Warwick, there are two Masters in two separate departments; these are shown in the same entry with a line dividing the departments.

In the case of the UK, we know which unis submit research under English Language and Literature, so we have added in an English Ranking on page 22.

The QS ranking is by reputation and by research power (the number of academic citations), so for the UK universities we have added information on their ranking in the

government's 2021 REF, which evaluates research submitted across a wide range of criteria. The number refers to the rank we gave them in our rankings last year.

All the information used in these rankings refer to research qualities. There are plenty of other qualities to consider when choosing a Masters: teaching quality, levels of graduate employment, availability of teaching practice, and additional qualifications on offer, such as CELTA or DELTA, to name but a few.

There are plenty of good Masters courses in the UK and Ireland which are not listed in this section. We also might have missed some that do qualify under the two research metrics we use, the QS subject rankings and the UKREF. If you feel your department has been missed out, do not hesitate to contact us.



KEY

Italics = relevant for those aiming to work in International Schools

AL = Applied Linguistics

TESOL = Teaching English as a Second or Other Language

MA = Master of Arts

SLA = Second Language Acquisition

Ed. = Education

MSC = Masters of Science

* = this degree is for experienced teachers only

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Education rankings

University	QS Global Rank	REF 2021 ELG Score	Department	Course
1. Institute of Education, UCL	1	5	Faculty of Education & Society	AL TESOL TESOL* <i>MA Global Learning</i>
2. University of Oxford	5	1	Education	AL for Language Teaching (D) AL & SLA
3. University of Edinburgh	13	15	Moray House School of Education and Sport	MSc TESOL
4. King's College	22	4	Education, Communication & Society	MA AL* TESOL <i>MA International Ed.</i> <i>MA Development Studies</i>
5. Bristol	31	6	Education	TESOL*
6. Glasgow	43	8	Education	MSc TESOL MSc AL <i>MSc International & Comparative Ed.</i> <i>MSc Development Studies</i>
7. Manchester	45	7	Education	MA TESOL MSc TESOL MSc AL
8. Leeds	76	17	Education	MA TESOL
9. Queen's University Belfast	101-150	10	Social Sciences, Education & Social Work	MA TESOL w/ AL
10. Warwick	101-150	11	Applied Linguistics	MA TESOL MA AL
			Education Studies	<i>MA Global Ed. & International Development</i>
11. Bath	101-150	14	Education	MA TESOL <i>MA International Ed. & Globalisation</i>
11. Oxford Brookes	101-150	20	Education, Humanities & Languages	MA Ed. (TESOL)
13. Exeter	151-200	18	Education	MEd TESOL* <i>MA International Ed.</i>
13. Open University	151-200	20	Education	MA Ed.
15. Sheffield Hallam	251-300	19	Education	MA TESOL

English language rankings

University	QS Global Rank	REF 2021 ELG Score	Department	Course
1. Birmingham	27	3	English Language & Linguistics	MA TESOL MA AL MA AL w/ TESOL* (DL available)
2. Cardiff	67	4	English, Communication & Philosophy	MA AL MA TESOL
3. Nottingham	73	3	English	MA AL MA AL & Language Teaching (DL)
4. Liverpool	89	5	English	MA TESOL MA AL w/ TESOL
5. Swansea	101-120	8	Culture & Communication	MA TESOL
5. Sheffield	101-150	8	English	MA AL MA AL w/ TESOL
7. Northumbria	301-350	10	English	MA AL MA AL w/ TESOL

Linguistics rankings

University	QS Global Rank	REF 2021 ELG Score	Department	Course
1. Edinburgh	4	5	Philosophy, Psychology & Language Sciences	MSc AL
2. Lancaster	10	1	Linguistics & English Language	MA AL & TESOL (& DL) MA TESOL w/ Corpus Linguistics (DL) MA TESOL w/ Testing (DL)
3. Birmingham	49	2	English Language & Linguistics	MA TESOL* MA TESOL w/ AL MA AL
4. Essex	101-150	3	Language & Linguistics	MA TESOL MA AL
4. Newcastle	101-150	4	Education	MA AL w/ TESOL
4. Trinity College Dublin	101-150	N/A	Linguistic, Speech & Communication Science	MPhil AL* MPhil ELT*
4. Reading	101-150	5	English Language & Applied Linguistics	MA TESOL* MA AL
8. Southampton	201-250	6	Languages & Linguistics	MA AL for Language Teaching* MA TESOL*
8. Aston	201-250	N/A	English, Languages & Applied Linguistics	MA TESOL
8. University College Dublin	201-250	N/A	English & Global Languages	MA TESOL*

Career progress means changing sector

Looking for the next step in your career? *Melanie Butler* gives her perspective...

Not very many years ago there was a clear road map to a career in private sector English Language Teaching; at least in the UK, the Antipodes, the Middle East and most of Europe.

You graduated from a University, took a four week training course – typically from the University of Cambridge, Trinity College London, or from their national equivalents – then took a job abroad for at least two years. Then you took a Diploma and got a job in academic management at a private language school or taught in a tertiary college. Finally, if you really wanted to break into the academic big time, you took a Masters.

Now it is not so simple. Most jobs in most countries still require a degree in order to obtain a visa. Now two-thirds of accredited UK language schools take non-graduate teachers, while in Malta they can employ school leavers who did well in their English exam at 18. The number of four-week online courses is at an all-time high, and figuring out which ones are acceptable and where is a full-time job.

Most UK language schools – and those in Europe – still require a Diploma for Academic Management, but with wages for Dosses on par with those on offer to the manager of a fast food outlet, it's hard to justify the £3500-5000 cost of the course.

It's a shame because the 'Dip', as these diplomas are generally known, are really good training courses. But unless your employer offers to pay you to do one, don't expect to see a return on your investment.

There are, as there always are, parts of the world which pay EFL teachers well: Japan, Korea, Taiwan are holding up, and Francophone North Africa is currently booming, with salaries higher than those in Southern Europe. But all still prize native-speakerism above any qualification, and don't know the difference between a 'Dip' and an online course from any Tom, Dick or Harry.

There is no longer any point in paying for your own higher qualification to improve your career in the private sector. Instead, you pay for a higher qualification to get out of it.

The question is not 'which qualification do I need to get on'; ask instead 'which one do I need to get out?'

Take the University Sector. If you want to teach English to University students there are plenty of jobs at decent rates of pay across the world, except the US where the demand for pre-university language courses is falling. However, to get on any of the places that pay well, you will need a Masters. In the Middle East they may insist on one taken on campus and face to face, because they have been stung once too often by fake Masters certificates bought online from a 'university'

which turns out to be a diploma mill run out of a basement in Delaware.

A Masters can also help you get a job teaching in an international school, especially those run on American, Australian or Canadian lines. It can offer a leg up into the tertiary and vocational sectors, which are also undergoing a boom.

In fact, a Masters is the most flexible of the available career qualifications. However, if you want a University career as an academic, teaching teachers to teach English rather than students to speak it, you will still normally need to do a Doctorate.

Other options, at least if you fancy working with young Learners in a British International School, is train to do that. A number of Universities, including Oxford and Bath, offer related Masters or you can opt for an IPGCE, sometimes confusingly called a PGCEI, the international version of the UK state school training courses. These can be done on campus (University of Buckingham), in local training centres overseas (University of Nottingham), or in mixed mode (University of Bath). Currently, most of the courses do not equal Qualified Teacher Status in the UK.

But with 350,000 teaching jobs overseas, in British-style international schools alone, with proper pay and free accommodation and flights home, forget language schools; this is the classroom career which offers progression.





Plane English

Paul Stevens, CEO of Mayflower College in Plymouth, UK, has been specialising in Aviation English training and testing since 1992. Here, Paul explains what Aviation English is, and how it differs from others forms of English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

The aviation industry generates many billions of dollars in revenue each year and sustains millions of jobs, both directly and indirectly; airports, airlines, aircraft manufacturers, logistics companies and associated businesses all contribute significantly to the global economy. Experts predict that by 2033 the number of commercial aircraft will rise by 33% and that passenger numbers will grow by 5.8% per year until 2040.

The common language of international aviation is English.

The term 'Aviation English' could cover many professions, including flight attendants, mechanics, airport security officers, IT experts, engineers, and baggage handlers who

all have specific ESP requirements. In reality, Aviation English usually means the language used by pilots and air traffic controllers, especially when they are communicating with each other over the radio. Controllers typically speak directly with pilots to manage traffic flows and ensure aircraft reach their destinations safely and efficiently.

Radiotelephony – the act of speaking over radio – has been the focus of much attention since 2008, when the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), introduced the ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements. Essentially this means that all pilots and controllers working internationally must have a minimum level of Aviation English, commonly referred to as ICAO Operational

Level 4. Most have to pass Aviation English exams every 3-5 years, and many take English courses to help them prepare.

The primary goal of Aviation English is to ensure the clear and unambiguous transfer of information. It is generally divided into two parts: Standard Phraseology and Plain English.

Standard Phraseology

A lot of communication between pilots and controllers is routine. As an example, air traffic controllers will: provide pilots with permission to land, take off, or taxi; give information about the weather; give instructions for which direction to fly, at what speed, and at what altitude.

To handle these routine situations, Standard Phraseology is used, which is typically taught by aviation experts, rather than EFL teachers. Here's one example:

DELTA 345, RUNWAY 06, WIND 080 DEGREES, 10 KNOTS, QNH 1012, VISIBILITY 8 KM, TIME 04 TAXI TO HOLDING POINT, RUNWAY 06 VIA TAXIWAY ALPHA.

Pronunciation is different in some cases, to avoid confusion and misunderstanding. As such, the numbers three, four, five and nine are pronounced 'tree', 'fo-wer', 'fife' and 'niner', respectively. However, Standard Phraseology cannot cover every possible situation. This is where Plain English comes into play.

Plain English

When Standard Phraseology is no longer sufficient, pilots and controllers are required to switch to Plain English.

Plain English does not follow the strict and standardised terminology of Standard Phraseology. However, it is also not 'General English'. In aviation, Plain English is characterised by its simplicity and clarity. It avoids complex sentence structures, jargon and technical terms that may be difficult for non-native speakers to understand. This could be:

'The airport's medical services have requested an update on your sick passenger.'

'You are approaching restricted airspace. Do you have permission to enter?'

'Our injured passenger is only suffering from minor cuts and bruises. We no longer need that ambulance upon arrival.'

The goal is to make communication as straightforward as possible, delivered clearly, precisely and slowly; ICAO recommends a maximum speech rate of 100 words per minute. Plain English can be taught by suitably trained EFL teachers.

So, how is Aviation English different from other forms of ESP? It comes down to a few factors:

- 1) The stakes are extremely high. It is difficult to think of another domain where the consequences of miscommunication can be so catastrophic; it has been shown to be a factor in 70% of all aviation incidents and accidents.
- 2) In the testing process, pilots and controllers are tested only on their speaking and listening skills.
- 3) One of the functions of language is to form bonds and relationships between people. In Radiotelephony, this is not the case; personal names are not used and 'chatting' is strongly discouraged.
- 4) In traditional settings, teachers often encourage their students to improve their fluency, even if this is at the expense of accuracy. In Radiotelephony, accuracy is paramount; a misunderstanding over a single word can have grave consequences.
- 5) 'Read-back' is a critical procedure to maintain safety in aviation. Read-back is the process by which a pilot repeats an instruction or clearance to confirm they correctly heard and understood, allowing the controller to verify that the pilot can comply.

Communication is a shared responsibility

An interesting development in Aviation English, and other domains, is the growing awareness that the responsibility for effective communication does not lie solely with non-native speakers improving their English; native speakers also have a critical role to play and could contribute much more by:

- Improving their empathy for the challenges faced by their NNES colleagues.
- Speaking more clearly, concisely and slowly.
- Avoiding idiomatic language and jargon.

A survey of 1,974 pilots and controllers from 112 countries asked: 'Do you think that aviation safety is ever compromised because of the way native speakers use English?' Of those who answered, 65% said 'yes'.

Although the teaching of Aviation English is largely unregulated, there are opportunities for EFL teachers looking to specialise. With suitable training and experience, English language teachers can also work in the delivery and grading of tests using the parameters and descriptors developed by ICAO.

Aviation is a fascinating industry where safety is always at the forefront of people's thinking. Communication in English is at the very heart of this effort.



Paul is the founder/CEO of Mayflower College, Plymouth, which has specialised in the teaching and testing of Aviation English for over 30 years. His

latest project is in helping native English speakers to improve their communication skills with non-native English speakers.





Neurodiversity and teaching EFL abroad

*For many, it is not just culture shock to overcome when teaching overseas. Writer and educator, **Andrew Theophilou** explains the challenges for neurodiverse teachers in new environments.*

Mental health has become a hot topic in recent years, with a growing body of literature on the subject in relation to TEFL. Classroom practitioners are considered particularly vulnerable in the industry, due to the widely acknowledged demands of teaching. Those working abroad, however, can face additional challenges unrelated to TEFL, while at the same time feeling cut off from the support usually available to colleagues back home. When talking about ways to foster the wellbeing of EFL teachers, therefore, it is worth looking at the geographical as well as professional context, not to mention the backdrop of new and emerging approaches to mental health care worldwide.

So, what sort of challenges to mental health does teaching abroad present? Some people consider stress, anxiety, and burnout to be part and parcel of the TEFL role, regardless of location. For those teaching overseas at the start of their careers, homesickness or culture shock are widely regarded as character-building elements which form an integral part of the experience. Likewise, it would hardly be surprising if anyone living and working in a foreign country found themselves feeling socially excluded or isolated at times.

But the difficulties a teacher faces can mask deeper, long-term conditions. Simply attributing them to the regular demands of teaching abroad can lead to a deterioration in mental health if the root cause lies

somewhere else. Allowing certain underlying conditions to remain undetected can extend suffering unnecessarily and delay a person's decision to reach out for appropriate support, either within the workplace or beyond.

This is particularly the case with autism, ADHD and Complex PTSD, which are increasingly being diagnosed in adults later in life. Our understanding of such conditions and disabilities has changed dramatically over recent decades, forcing a re-evaluation of our approach to mental health care for those concerned. Indeed, the difficulties historically faced by this demographic have often resulted in misdiagnoses by mental health services, leading to a downward spiral of mental ill health, discrimination, and exclusion from employment and other opportunities.

It's important to underline that having a diagnosis for a mental health disability does not necessarily preclude anyone from leading a successful career in the mainstream TEFL industry, but discrimination by employers and wider society often does. For this reason, it would be perfectly understandable if anyone with a diagnosis chose not to disclose such information to their employers, who in any case may not be in a position to provide the right support.

Reaching out directly to local mental health care providers, however, is not always easy, even in your home country, especially where services are over-stretched. Doing this abroad poses additional challenges and, depending on which country you are in, some potential risks.

It's easy to imagine how language barriers and cultural differences can lead to challenges and misunderstandings, especially when it comes to talking therapies. But attitudes to mental health also vary drastically from one place to another and this is often reflected in law and national health care systems. In addition, the widespread lack of understanding or acceptance of neurodiversity means that those seeking support at times of difficulty are quick to be pathologised. The fact that different countries use different diagnostic criteria further raises the potential for those living abroad to be wrongly labelled and, consequently, wrongly treated.

In order to avoid such situations in the first place, it could be helpful for anyone teaching abroad to ensure they have a high level of mental health literacy and neurodiversity awareness at the outset. But how can anyone be sure they have the right tools, knowledge and self-awareness when sources of information these days are often questionable? And why would a teacher worry about their future personal resilience while things are going well and the outlook is good? What's more, with a TEFL certificate under your belt, what could possibly go wrong?

Unfortunately, mental health literacy is not on the syllabus and neurodiversity awareness in the TEFL industry is arguably dire. It goes without saying that certain neurotypical ideals are reflected in course materials, teaching methods and language assessments everywhere in the world. The result can be

unintentional discrimination against learners, but this can also have a serious negative impact on the mental health of teachers too. In order to really understand how this can come about, it's necessary to take a closer look at what neurodiversity actually is.

The Harvard Medical School website explains it like this:

'Neurodiversity describes the idea that people experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways; there is no one "right" way of thinking, learning, and behaving, and differences are not viewed as deficits.'

What does this mean for an industry whose core aim is to teach people the 'right' way to communicate and interact with others in the English language? The emphasis on inclusivity until now has been primarily on issues concerning the diversity of learning styles, with little attention paid to what we teach and the skills we try to impart, namely the neurotypical norms of communication and social interaction. This can be alienating and discriminatory even for those who don't have a learning disability but who would nonetheless be considered neurodivergent, which is the majority in the case of autism. In fact, two thirds of autistic people do not have a learning disability, according to the University of Cambridge.

The effect on teachers can be just as bad, even among the most outwardly 'functional' or 'successful' professionals. They may in

fact be struggling to get by in the workplace, masking any personality traits which could be construed as neurodivergent, in order to fit in and avoid being stigmatised or coming across as 'high-maintenance' employees. For teachers with an undiagnosed condition such as autism or ADHD, the impact can be worse still, as they are unlikely to fully understand the root cause of any difficulties they face. In addition to the emotional exhaustion and burnout that often comes with masking, they face the prospect of having their self-esteem and sense of identity eroded over time, as they go about teaching 'correct' ways of communicating which may be fundamentally at odds with their own nature.

Whatever the underlying cause, and regardless of whether there is a direct link to the profession or not, the onset of mental ill health can manifest itself when least expected. Finding yourself in this predicament in a foreign country without an adequate support network or the mental health literacy necessary to articulate your circumstances and seek appropriate help can be a frightening prospect.

There may well be those who argue that the more vulnerable among us should simply steer clear of the profession or seek opportunities at home rather than abroad. If you're not suited to the reality of teaching English or working abroad, do something else. But this

is not only an ignorant and lazy argument but a discriminatory one too. The neurodiversity movement challenges society – and employers – to adapt in order to accommodate a wider spectrum of neurotypes, to dismantle disabling workplace structures, processes or cultures and replace them with more inclusive alternatives.

In the specific case of TEFL, the problem is far more complex. We also need to rethink both the language we teach and the way that we teach it in order to take into account neurodiversity. Just as the industry has been trying to reign in the proliferation of colonialist, racist, sexist and homophobic ideologies in the classroom, so too must we face up to the discriminatory nature of the neurotypical ideals often conveyed or encouraged through English language in use.



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*How can management and leadership affect teacher morale? Teacher trainer and English language expert, **Giovanni Licata** explains how 'spillover' could be to blame for poor teacher wellbeing.*

Education is a dynamic field where school management styles have a significant impact on the wellbeing of teachers. The role of school administrators and academic managers goes beyond mere oversight. They shape the working environment for educators, affecting their job satisfaction, stress levels, and morale. Educators and academic managers familiar with the field's seminal literature have encountered various leadership and management styles.

Just like fashion eras, these styles have blossomed, sometimes replacing their predecessor, and sometimes overlapping and mixing: the autocratic, transformational, and laissez-faire styles, to name a few, have been explored in the context of education, each

with distinct characteristics that influence teachers' experiences.

When it comes to management styles, however, scholars have often focused on the phenomenon rather than its roots. Most of us will spontaneously agree from our experience that autocratic leaders tend to exert strict control, potentially diminishing teacher autonomy and increasing stress. In contrast, we will all have observed that transformational leaders inspire and motivate through shared vision and mentorship, fostering a more positive work atmosphere.

Research has demonstrated that transformational leadership positively affects teacher morale, job satisfaction, and overall wellbeing. On the other hand,

autocratic management styles have been linked to burnout and demotivation among educators. The organisational climate shaped by school management can also influence workplace stressors, teacher turnover rates, and student outcomes. Teacher wellbeing is intricately connected to students' learning experiences, emphasising the importance of understanding how management styles can either support or hinder educators' ability to perform optimally.

However, one of the limits of many studies into management styles and wellbeing is that they tend to describe management phenomena as clear-cut dichotomies – good/bad, autocratic/transformational – as they become apparent. What would be more useful for our educational institutions' wellbeing is

to identify the start, the roots, some hidden or quiescent signs of negative management before it's too late.

Recent years have forced us to become familiar with some microbiology jargon and vocabulary related to viruses, and most of you will be familiar with the concept of spillover. In simple terms, a spillover is the phenomenon that occurs when a pathogen moves away from a 'reservoir' species – a species that keeps it alive without any symptoms – to another species that will develop symptoms. The interesting aspect is the fact that the host, the reservoir species, keeps the virus alive without being affected.

The analogy with the educational context becomes apparent if one starts studying staff room dynamics like scientists observe ecosystems: when staff wellbeing seems to decrease abruptly and appear at risk, an observer might wonder where the problem originated and when/how it started. The answer to this question is not always apparent, not necessarily univocal, and not always readily available, since the host or hosts will not show any symptoms of the virus when it starts spreading. Hosts are not necessarily academic managers or coordinators; yet, similarly to any ecosystem, the species that have more contact or impact on the system itself tend to cause more damage.

Inspired by my observations on ecosystems, a few years back, I decided to conduct a small-scale survey among teachers who worked in different contexts across Europe. I asked them to define bad or good management. One might expect that the teachers' responses would mainly focus on ensuring organised, streamlined procedures, clarity of information, and on management styles, such as whether their managers acted as motivators rather than authorities. Some responses of that sort were indeed present. However, interestingly enough, what teachers seemed to focus on was their coordinators' ability to listen, to be empathetic, to create a positive work environment. What some teachers noticed in their open answers was that they could not quite identify what or where the problem was, but they knew they had suddenly started feeling that their school context was becoming less healthy and that their academic managers were sometimes passive-aggressive.

So, why are we often preoccupied and consumed by certain aspects of our educational environments and not others? Saarah Mercer, an inspirational author when it comes to teacher wellbeing, gives a possible answer as she clarifies that the vagueness surrounding the definition of wellbeing generates the absence of clear and strong messages to protect it. In Mercer's words: 'this lack of clarity has made the

concept an easy target for being dismissed by those who do not take the trouble to engage meaningfully with what well-being truly represents.'

With that in mind, what can we do to prevent pathogens from spreading? The analogy with virus reservoirs may again offer some solutions. And just like for scientists, reflection and observation are the first steps to finding a solution. A few questions we might want to start with when observing are: 1) Have our colleagues manifested fatigue or stress that we can't read? 2) Have we found ourselves reflecting on power dynamics in our ecosystem? 3) Have you had the chance to survey your staff? 4) Are we sometimes the host?

Evidently, the last question is the one that requires the most honest and urgent answer.




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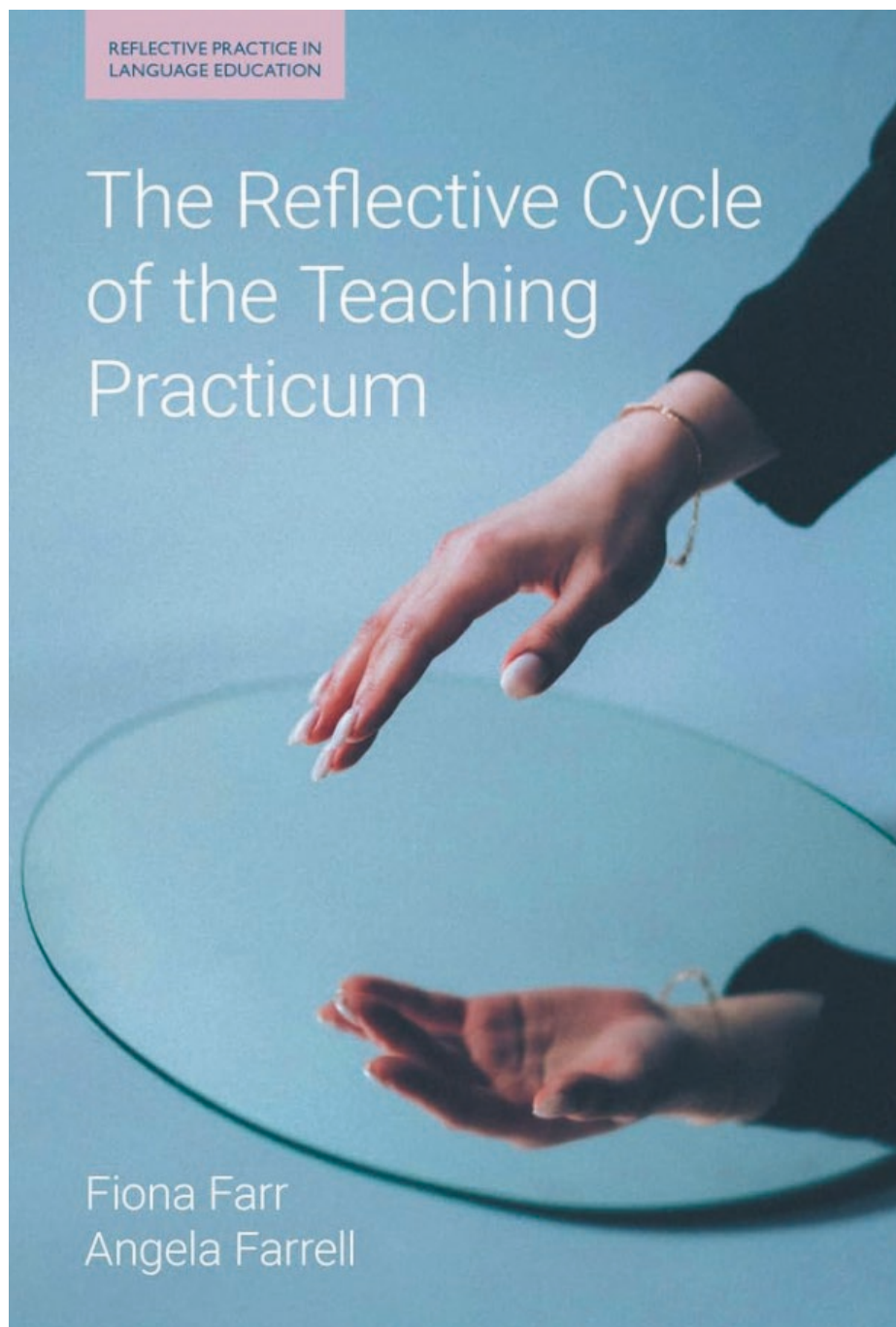
The Reflective Cycle of the Teaching Practicum
By Fiona Farr and Angela Farrell
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For many undergraduate trainee teachers in the UK, the final year spent in classrooms in different schools can be a harrowing experience. The most demanding of the three stints I did was usefully situated next to a police station just outside Northampton; help was at hand if needed, I felt. As with most readers of this journal, though, I survived and eventually did most of my learning on the job, in my own case in central Turkey.

I should point out that much of what has been published over the past decade on reflective practice (RP) I have found confusing, and it was with a degree of caution I approached this title. So here goes: the book under review here focuses on the practice cycle or 'practicum' of the ELT education programme, and if you're looking for entertaining anecdotes relating to alarming episodes experienced by novice teachers, then the chapters within are probably not for you. However, as they outline the reflective thought processes of ten teachers during their practicum in schools in Ireland on a course leading to an MA in ELT, then much of it will probably resonate.

The reflective model presented here is labelled 'PENSER', and if you listened even a little on your High School French course you'll recognise that verb without my needing to remind you. It's also an acronym describing the cycle outlined by the authors: Puzzle identification, Embracing, Noticing, Solving, and Experimentation and Research. The cycle of these five steps in five weeks is repeated three times over the course of an academic year. For each cycle, student teachers are asked to identify one aspect of their teaching practice where they felt particularly challenged, and on which they could focus during the following cycle. All crystal clear thus far, I think you'll agree. Let's take a closer look.

Chapter One introduces the concept of RP; it explains its origin and provides several evidence-based cases showing how effective it may be. Also outlined are the inevitable pros and cons. In the following chapter the authors explain their PENSER approach, and cover the literature related to RP theories, frameworks and approaches. Moving closer to the classroom, Chapter Three discusses socio-cultural theory and, almost inevitably, Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). After reading here how short his life was, however, I think perhaps we should refrain from continually stating how inchoate his notion of the ZPD appears. Completing this chapter are immensely insightful sections on the huge value to novice teachers of mentorship and observation by teacher educators, cooperating teachers and peers.



Chapters four to seven trace the reflective thinking and professional development of the ten teachers involved in the study. Chapter Four focuses on challenges faced in the early days of lesson planning and preparation. For novice teachers, classroom management is of the utmost importance, and the following chapter provides snapshots of challenges faced by the research cohort, anxiety being one of the main issues. Chapter Six introduces the reader to three cases, of which 22 year-old Shona is the first. By going through the PENSER stages, Shona was able to overcome her initial difficulties with teaching English grammar. The targeted RP involved in PENSER also enabled the two others to assume a more confident and expert teacher identity and role.

Corpus linguistics is used in Chapter Seven to assist with the development of

appropriate teacher talk and interactive skills, including the role and features of L2 classroom communication. Case studies involving two more course participants, Nina and Maria, are examined in chapter Eight, as they engage in post-observation feedback sessions. In the concluding chapter the authors suggest that the RP model they outline may be introduced on teacher development programmes. I would fully agree; this title more than most on the same topic, manages to clarify the value of RP to ELT practitioners.



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