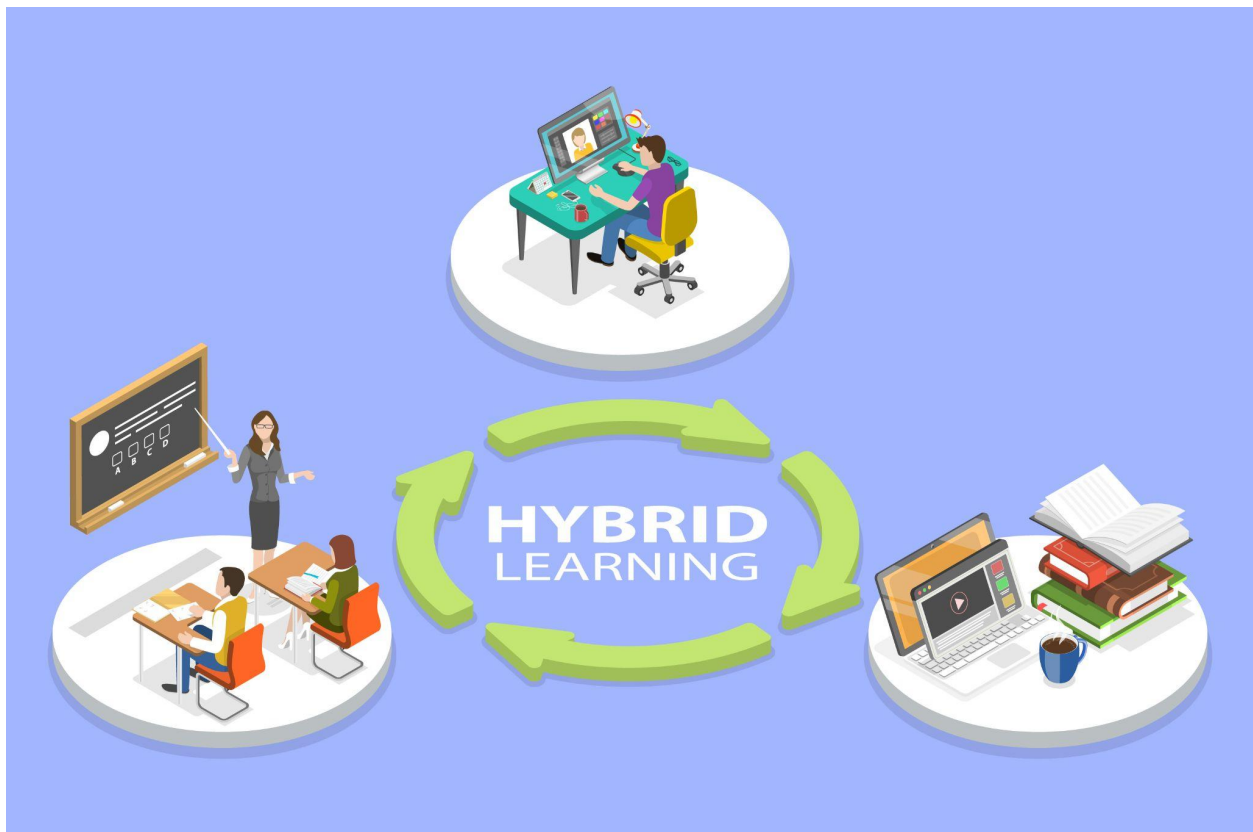




THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

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**INSIDE THIS EDITION:**

HYBRID LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING SOCIALLY JUST HYBRID LEARNING  
VIRTUAL REALITY FOR HYBRID STUDENT AGENCY MALL WITH REFUGEES  
EMERGENCY OR LONG TERM SOLUTION? TECH-IT-EASY: NEARPOD INTERVIEW WITH  
MARZIA TOLLARI LTSIG NEWS: THE COMMITTEE AND UPCOMING EVENTS



IATEFL, 2-3 The Foundry, Seager Road, Faversham, ME13 7FD, UK.

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## From the editors

Welcome to September's **LT**, the newsletter of the **IATEFL LTSIG**. This edition mostly focuses on talks delivered during IATEFL LTSIG PCE in Belfast 2022: **"Navigating hybrid learning: challenges and opportunities."**

We start this edition with an article on Hybrid Language Teaching and Learning by Professor David Barr, whose talk focused on the importance and the benefits of hybrid learning. Also, Gary Motteram described past and present research on hybrid learning. He discussed how hybridity has always been a necessary part of what teacher educators do, and the need to bridge gaps between theory and practice. Attendees were lucky to hear all about Virtual Reality in David Read's talk. He presented a debate on whether VR can supplement the traditional online lessons to provide the authentic practice and interaction normally offered by face-to-face classes. Back to the classroom, Abeer Okaz highlighted in her talk the challenges faced in higher education during the pandemic and the changes adopted to provide an opportunity for students to be more agentive. Caterina Skiniotou shared her experience of hybridity with adult refugees and offered free resources for designing mobile-friendly interactive materials, and developing information and media skills while building learning portfolios. Back to the classroom, Gemma included in her talk information about the different tools and technology that can be used in the classroom and online to achieve effective hybrid teaching. The day finished up with Joanna Paolinelli sharing her experience of hybrid, synchronous, or asynchronous online teaching over the past two years.

This edition also includes a Tech it Easy section focusing on NEARPOD by Letizia Cinganotto, and closes with an interview with a primary school teacher in Italy who shares her experience on the use of Hyperdocs.

We have also included some SIG news: a taster to the upcoming **LTSIG PCE** on Literature and Technology crossovers in Harrogate 2023, which we hope will encourage you to join us, and a spotlight on the LTSIG committee.

On behalf of us all in the LTSIG Committee, we hope you enjoy September's **LT**. Please get in touch and let us know what you want from the newsletter. We'd also love to hear from you if you would like to write an article. Contact us at for more info.

**Abeer Okaz and Letizia Cinganotto**, LTSIG content managers.



## Contents

[Coordinator News](#) **Vicky Saumell**

[Hybrid Language Teaching And Learning](#) **Professor David Barr** Review by **Letizia Cinganotto**

[Developing Socially Just Hybrid Learning For Language Teacher Education](#) **Gary Motteram** Review by **Serrana Muniz**

[Can Virtual Reality be a Hybrid option?](#) **David Read** Review by **Maria Diakou**

[Promoting Agency: Opportunities and Challenges](#) **Abeer Okaz** Review by **Maria Diakou**

[Affordances and constraints of mobile devices used in adult refugees, asylum-seekers and immigrants](#) **Caterina Skiniotou** Review by **Vicky Saumell**

[Experiences in delivering hybrid classes: Instructing Remote and In-person students in the same synchronous session](#) **Gemma Peacock** Review by **Abeer Okaz**

[From Emergency Online Teaching to Hybrid to the future of ELT](#) **Joanna Paolinelli** Review by **Belén Albarracín**

[Tech it Easy: Focus on NEARPOD](#) by **Letizia Cinganotto**

[Interview with \*\*Marzia Tollari\*\*, a primary school teacher in Italy on the use of Hyperdocs](#) by **Letizia Cinganotto**

[2023 PCE](#)

[The LTSIG committee](#)



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## Coordinator news



Dear member,

I'm very happy to welcome you all to a new issue of our newsletter **LT**. This year, we have come back to our face to face annual conference and were delighted to meet colleagues and friends again in Belfast in May. I'm especially happy to be able to produce a dedicated edition to the **2022 LTSIG PCE "Navigating hybrid learning: challenges and opportunities"**, held on May 16.

We have been busy planning interesting events for you! Starting with the decision to collaborate with LitSIG for our next PCE on crossovers between literature and technology, we also have three webinars lined up for the rest of the year, and some other exciting events in the pipeline.

IATEFL has recently announced all the scholarship winners and we are delighted to have **Sanja Bozinovic** as our next **Roving Reporter for the Harrogate 2023 annual conference**. She was the winner of our **Diana Eastment Scholarship** with full expenses paid. Remember it's well worth availing the opportunity to become one of our scholarship winners so be sure to apply for the next grant for 2024. The winner may be you!

On a different note, as I write this, news of the passing of **Vance Stevens** stir a whirlwind of emotions. Vance was the founder of the Webheads community of practice and for many years he led with passion and by example. I, as many others in the learning technologies field, became Webheads at some point. For me it was the Webheads in Action EVO session in January 2002 that changed my life forever. I cannot but pay tribute to his innovative spirit and all that he did for learning technologies in language learning field. The legacy he leaves behind will hopefully be carried through by the Webheads community he inspired.

The LTSIG committee is committed to bring you quality professional development opportunities so stay tuned, follow our publications and social media, and let us know any ideas you may have to improve our SIG.

With best wishes,  
**Vicky Saumell**  
LTSIG Coordinator

**Hybrid Language Teaching and Learning:  
key challenges and considerations: a UK case study**

**Professor David Barr**

(Head of the School of Education: Ulster University, United Kingdom)

Talk Review by **Letizia Cinganotto**

**Abstract**

*This paper considers the key approaches towards the integration of technology in language learning in the United Kingdom. Using evidence from a longitudinal UK-wide study, it discusses the main characteristics of such an environment, including technical and physical resources, training and cultural contexts. This paper highlights some of the most innovative, collaborative and communicative approaches that have been adopted and the differences in the hybrid use of digital technologies across the UK. It discusses the general trend towards quite an enthusiastic adoption of technology in language teaching in the British Higher Education sector. The comparative study assesses the impact of technology in a number of areas of the teaching and learning environment. It explores the reasons that explain their level of integration into language and wider higher education pedagogy. The presentation outlines the key attitudinal factors that influence the use of technology in hybrid delivery and considers their impact in the context of COVID-19. The paper concludes with key considerations and recommendations about the integration of digital technology in higher education learning and teaching environments.*

Professor Barr's presentation was about the importance and the benefits of hybrid learning, as one of the greatest lessons learnt from the pandemic. Hybrid learning is not actually new, as it stems from the many research strands on the integration of technologies into the process of language learning and teaching, such as CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning), TELL (Technology-Enhanced Language Learning), MALL (Mobile-Assisted Language Learning), multimedia language learning, and digital learning.

The key word to the developments in technology is "integration". After being considered the "panacea" at the beginning, computers and technologies were not actually so much used for language learning and teaching.

Pandemic has forced all of us to do that, and what is important after three years of massive use of technologies is the need to focus more on pedagogy than on technology.

Prof. Barr reported the main results from two surveys on learning technologies dating back to 2006 and 2010 launched across the UK. Although quite old, those data confirmed what has happened recently due to the pandemic: teachers and learners were afraid of using new technologies and of getting out of their comfort zone. Text-based communication was preferred to synchronous audio or video chat.



That is exactly what happened during the pandemic: at the beginning it was a challenge for both learners and teachers to move from asynchronous forms of communication to synchronous video or audio-calls or conferences.

As far as teachers are concerned, Prof. Barr referred to a taxonomy identifying three profiles of teachers according to their level of technology adoption:

- Radicals
- Reluctant
- Resistant

Nowadays, in the post-covid era, apart from a minority of enthusiastic and techy teachers, the majority of them are reluctant and decide to use technologies only if needed and only if they can see real and immediate benefits, which can be good as well: “A good teacher is a good teacher regardless of the technologies used”.

Referring to learners, prof. Barr highlighted the need to take into consideration the digital divide and the problem of accessibility: some students could only access via mobile phone to the classes during the pandemic, and a lot of them abandoned because they were not engaged nor monitored. Another issue to take into consideration is the fact that learners do not want to get out of their comfort zone and do not like using their personal social spaces such as social media and network for learning: teachers need to change the learning environment, varying the different forms of media and channels.



In his final remarks, Prof. Barr recalled the COVID crush that often caused panic as nobody was prepared to switch to fully remote teaching from one day to the other; at a later stage of the pandemic we could identify some benefits and some weaknesses at the same time. In fact, we all learnt the crucial role of technologies for language learning and teaching, which we can now take advantage of. At the same time, many teachers and students now would say: “I will never use technologies again”, as they had a bad experience during the pandemic. We should find the right balance among different positions, engaging learners socially and emotionally, as they are socio-emotional learners.

### **Biodata**

***David Barr** is Professor of Technology-Enhanced Learning at Ulster University. He wrote his PhD on the role of computer technology in language learning and teaching, which has since been published as a research monograph. As part of this project, he carried out work at the Universities of Cambridge and Toronto. David is currently Head of the School of Education, having previously served as the Head of the School of Languages and Cultures and then Modern Languages, as well as Faculty Learning and Teaching Coordinator. He has significant experience of working with a range of employers, public and government bodies to promote awareness of the importance of subject development for the local economy and has led significant developments in the modern languages and teacher education, serving as a member of the Department of Education’s Initial Teacher Education Working Group. He is also a leading expert in computer-assisted language learning, serving as an associate editor for two leading international journals in the area, Treasurer of EUROCALL (the European Association for Computer-Assisted Language Learning) and is a member of the WorldCALL steering committee (World Association for Computer-Assisted Language Learning) and chair of the WorldCALL international scientific committee*





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## Developing socially just hybrid learning for language teacher education

Gary Motteram

(Honorary Senior Research Fellow in Education at the Manchester Institute of Education)

Talk Review by Serrana Muniz

### Abstract

*Whilst teaching languages at a distance has been less prominent in the field of ELT, teacher education has for many years been offered at a distance. Its history and current use shows the diversity of what can be achieved, and it has always made use of a diverse range of technologies.*

*This session will then include some history, but with present relevance. It will show how hybridity has always been a necessary part of what we do as teacher educators. The need to bridge gaps between theory and practice, to bring what happens in live classrooms into the discussion and the need to meet the needs of a wide range of teachers has been at the heart of teacher educators' creativity in making use of technology. From asynchronous courses making use of online content and discussion forums, through the blended solutions of flying tutors, to our abilities now to use synchronous and asynchronous tools together, as well as linking face-to-face and online. The session will show how this can be achieved in both the global north and the global south and how we should see this kind of provision as the gold standard to meet the needs of English language teacher development as we need to take account of the climate crisis and accept we have to travel less to take up teacher education opportunities.*

It was an honor to welcome Gary Motteram as a plenary speaker, as he has been a very active member of the LT SIG and a frequent presenter since our very first PCE in 1998. He has been using technologies to deliver teacher education programmes for decades.

During his talk, he first gave a background for the topic in relation to social justice to later move on to definitions of key concepts. He subsequently described the history of hybrid teaching (going further back to 1928!). Finally, some cases of hybrid teaching education were discussed and analyzed in terms of their implications for future practice.

The focus on socially just teacher education relates to the fourth of the sustainable development goals, especially target 4c, which aims to 'substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States' (<https://www.sdg4education2030.org/the-goal>). The potential of learning technologies -and hybrid models in particular- to reach disadvantaged contexts using low-tech solutions is undeniable, and is part of Gary's research and action interests. Additionally, distance learning can reduce the impact of human activity to the planet, as international plane travel is a great source of pollution. Food for thought for us all, international conference lovers.

Moving on to definitions of key terms, according to Motteram, an interesting fact that author Hrastinski (2019) pointed out is that blended learning is actually a more recent term than hybrid learning. Less academic sources associate them with personalized learning, flipped classroom and other terminology connected with using digital technologies for disruptive educational practices. The perception of attendants, gathered through menti, was that hybrid teaching relates to having both f2f and distance learners in the same classroom, as well as a combination of synchronous and asynchronous opportunities for language development, with a focus on student choice and underlying pedagogical considerations.

Going deeper into the history of videoconferencing, we find that the very first teleconference seems to have taken place in 1928! Since then, a trajectory of a number of technologies have been used to aid learning, which have certainly evolved, but at the same time, stayed the same at its core.

## Development of VC-ing

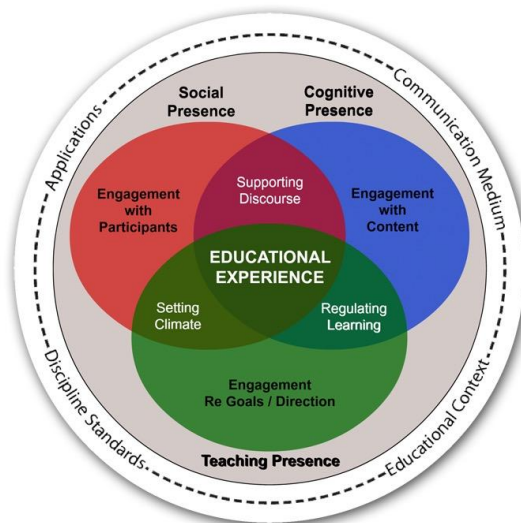
The diagram illustrates the development of videoconferencing through four stages:

- 1928 -- Bell Labs two-way TV -- Herbert Hoover:** A historical photograph showing a man sitting in a chair, connected to a large wall-mounted television set via a complex network of cables and equipment.
- Room based systems -- 1980s:** A photograph of a meeting room where several people are seated around a table, looking at a large screen displaying a video conference.
- Desktop systems -- CU-SeeMe --1992:** A screenshot of a multi-person desktop video conference interface with several small video windows and control buttons.
- Where we are now:** A photograph of a modern classroom or meeting room with a large screen at the front displaying a video conference, and a person standing at the front pointing at the screen.

Alternating between asynchronous and synchronous forms of communication in any tech-based learning environment is recommended, as both have special affordances that can enhance the learning experience. However, we must stress the role of synchronous instances, which provide ‘the glue’, the possibility of live interaction, to socially construct knowledge so deep understanding of ideas can happen and a community of practice can blossom. While asynchronous instances allow to record engagement, weave and develop ideas, shared synchronous time holds the community together.

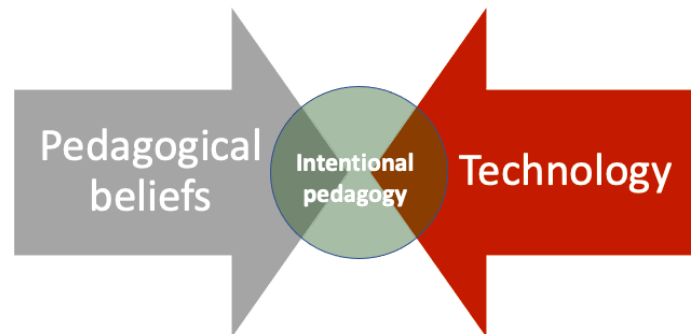
This combination for a hybrid programme is socially just, as it allows students who would otherwise be unable to commit to the f2f time traditional classrooms require, to continue studying. Nevertheless, digital divide considerations are still necessary, as nowadays the main challenge is no longer access to devices, but access to reliable internet connections and enough data instead.

In relation to this, the Community of Enquiry model that originated with distance learning and was also used for blended learning, talked about presence in its different forms: social, cognitive and teaching (this latter one can refer to learning among different participants). The following chart summarizes it:



Hybrid teaching and learning experiences can be maximized by combining these ideas with Michael Trucano's '10 principles to consider when introducing ICTs into remote, low-income educational environments'

(<https://blogs.worldbank.org/edutech/10-principles-consider-when-introducing-icts-remote-low-income-educational-environments>). One of the highlighted concepts referred to is the principle of starting with the teachers and their needs: don't start with high-tech and an expectation of advanced Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge, but at their present stage instead, and build from there. This way, intentional pedagogy will be able to surface.



Considering all the above discussion, Gary provided an overview and critical analysis of cases he has actively taken part of, with a main focus on the following ones:

- Teaching with Skype project developed from initial work in Pakistan (2013-2015), which led on to an IATEFL Project (CI-ATEFL -- now CINELTA) in 2016) and work with Syrian teachers who are refugees in Jordan in 2016-17 (ESRC IAA -- University of Manchester funding).

This project focused on the use of Skype, but they borrowed an idea from the Uruguayan large-scale Ceibal en inglés programme, which relies on an on-site tutor to facilitate remote teaching.

- British Council ELTRA project (2018-19) exploring teacher development and resilience using WhatsApp: focuses on three countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon and Rwanda.

In this programme, the leaders continued to evaluate the role of social media in facilitating communities of practice. They highlight the importance of focusing on the teacher rather than the learners to have a lasting impact on the educational scenario. They did this hybridly, providing teachers in Manchester who connected with teachers in those locations (with a mentor physically present to facilitate it). One way this was done was having meetings in the local school in which teachers connected with one phone (shared among various teachers) to zoom. The results were very positive and it relied on rather low-tech.



Other projects Motteram has worked on and that you can find more about following the data in the slides are:

- English Connects project (2019)
- GCRF funded project working with teachers in Côte d'Ivoire
- British Council report and toolkit (built by teachers, not yet completed)
- Working with teachers of students who were refugees during the pandemic (Caritas Refugee Education)

Some of the main conclusions across these projects were:

- The importance of complementing synchronous instances with asynchronous spaces (these can be simple, like padlet).
- It is possible to run teacher development sessions in low resource contexts using technology, but ideally these would be supported by local mentoring.
- There needs to be a community effort.
- While social media are powerful tools, and can do a lot, they need supplementing.

### **Biodata**

**Gary Motteram** is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow in Education at the Manchester Institute of Education where he taught for thirty plus on MAs in TESOL, Digital Technology in Education and the PGCert in Higher Education. His research interests lie in the area of language teacher education at a distance with a more recent focus on using mobiles to support teacher education in low resourced contexts. His most recent projects are a GCRF funded project on teacher professional development through practitioner research: <https://tateproject.wordpress.com/> and a project work with Adult ESOL teachers developing materials for online delivery during the pandemic: <https://refugeeeducationtoolkit.org/>. For more detail and publications look here:

<https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/gary.motteram.html>

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## Can Virtual Reality be a Hybrid option?

David Read

(University of Sheffield)

Talk Review by Maria Diakou

### Abstract

*When we think of hybrid teaching we generally think of a combination of online and face-to-face teaching with students having the option to access a lesson in two different ways. But what if other options exist, particularly where face-to-face isn't an option. In this presentation, I'll explore whether Virtual Reality (VR) can supplement the traditional online lessons to provide the authentic practice and interaction normally offered by face-to-face classes. Over the last year, I've been running a series of English courses in VR using a platform called Immerse to explore the possibilities and challenges that this new technology can offer. The courses experimented with different input combinations to determine which worked most effectively and for what kinds of contexts. Some lessons were delivered purely in VR, some purely via video conferencing (Zoom) and others a combination of the two. This presentation will report back on the experience of teaching these courses and provide extensive feedback from the students on how it felt to study in these different modes. I'll also show some clips from the lessons to give some idea of what a hybrid VR class looks like. I'll also explore the future possibilities that VR might offer for both face-to-face and online learning and discuss some of the barriers to its wider adoption.*

In his insightful talk on Virtual Reality in Language Learning, David Read talks about the role and implications of Virtual Reality, which is already transforming our lives in language learning. He suggests that VR may provide some solutions to some of the challenges of online and hybrid learning, helping with practicing a language. He gives some background information on VR concerning language learning regarding research and the potential benefits that VR can have. Furthermore, he mentions where this technology might be going in the future and how it might be used to support and develop our ideas of online and hybrid learning.

He mentions that there are quite significant barriers to us being able to adopt VR in any meaningful way. One is, to a certain degree, the limited functionality of what VR can do since, from a linguistic perspective, there is not much you can do with it. He mentions that VR gives you the experience of interacting with the environment, moving through it, and using a kind of controller that makes it a very kinesthetic experience. This can have tremendous potential for language learning since students can now interact with the environment and people.





Unfortunately, as he later notes, the big issue comes down to cost and space with some of these headsets. They would be very prohibitive for most people since one of the other significant issues with VR is that it's still quite a highly technical technology. Sometimes, it feels like you need a computer science degree to do anything with them. But as he further mentions, there are a lot of these good sorts of social VR apps where we can go online and meet people using virtual reality; it's so technically challenging to do that what you tend to end up doing is reproducing a classroom in a virtual reality space which kind of misses the point of the virtual reality your virtual reality gives you this option to explore these wonderful worlds and be immersed in all these different places.

Furthermore, VR is beneficial for engagement and motivation since immersing students in these different environments can be incredibly exciting for them. There's a specific novelty value there, but enough studies have been done to suggest it often goes beyond just the novelty value of wearing a headset. In actual sort of genuine engagement and motivation there are again several studies that indicate that VR can help with anxiety reduction when learning a language since students usually have this kind of fear of making mistakes, fear of looking foolish when speaking a second language. Because VR often puts you in a sort of an avatar. You can't see other people's faces; you know it helps reduce all that anxiety, and students are much more willing to communicate, practice, and make mistakes than they would in a classroom situation.

It also helps with transferring and contextualization, meaning when they learn something in VR, they often learn it in the context where that language would be. So you're learning how to buy tickets in a train station when you're faced with that situation in real life; that language is much easier to retrieve simply because that's where you used it in VR but sometimes, when you use it in the classroom, it's often in a slightly artificial context it's a bit more difficult to retrieve it when you're put into that actual situation.

According to David Read, research also suggests that vocabulary recall is enhanced by studying in VR and maybe by learning the vocabulary in that context that allows you to find that vocabulary again in real life. Hence, there are many positives about how VR can help language learning.



As he goes on, he refers to some headsets that are much more accessible and cheaper than the ones he mentioned earlier and can be taken anywhere. He notes that they're reasonably portable, and the quality is excellent, not as good as these high-end ones but certainly better than the old google cardboard ones where you stuck the camera into them. He also says that they've become incredibly popular, and he thinks that the pandemic has been a major factor in this; these things have sold millions in the last couple of years.

David also refers to the online world you can inhabit: you can go there, and you can meet your friends, play games, and chat. He refers to games like Fortnite, where people can stand there and watch concerts and not shoot each other. He mentions other apps like Minecraft and similar games with a social aspect. He refers to the idea of a metaverse which is becoming increasingly common now in everyday talk and apps and software which are not technical but designed in a way accessible and usable by both students and teachers and specific for language learning.

David talks about apps and tools on the computer that are sort of teacherly and pedagogical tools that make it easy for you to manage the virtual reality classroom. He mentions little icons that allow you to do various things within the online room, even for the teacher's kind of animation, so that you can wave, clap, give thumbs up, and respond to what the students are saying and doing. People were interested in this, particularly during the pandemic, since they were exploring ways to deliver online learning in different ways as teachers got a bit tired of some of the zoom lessons and the online lessons they were doing.

He moves on to mention the next course they ran, where they went to a more sort of blended or hybrid approach where the first part of the lesson would be in zoom where teachers would do the input for about sort of 15-20 minutes and then they would go into the VR space and do the actual practice and production there and that seemed to work a lot better, and generally, students responses to that were better because they did some lessons only in VR on that course and then some with zoom and VR and asking them to compare they were saying that they prefer having the combination.

According to David, the teachers said that designing lesson content was much more difficult for a hybrid lesson than for a purely online or face-to-face lesson because you have to think of materials that will engage both the face-to-face and the online students at the same time. Issues of pacing as well as when you have a sort of a hybrid environment the pace of the lesson slows down quite significantly. Hence, you learn as you wait for the online people to respond, type, or give the answer. You're not sure whether there's a problem with the technology, or you know some of that usual pace and sort of feeling of kind of momentum you have in class can often stall when you're in a hybrid context.

So what is evident is that VR is changing the teaching reality we've been used to and challenging us to take control over new things shaping the world in a way which is best for our students and us. Hybrid learning has been a reality since the pandemic and VR can work to support our students in language learning.

### **Biodata**

*David Read is Director of Technology-Enhanced Learning at the ELTC, University of Sheffield. He has worked in EFL for over twenty-eight years as a teacher, teacher trainer and educational technologist, working in countries such as Greece, Morocco, Serbia, Korea and Kyrgyzstan. His research interests include technology education, instructional design and virtual reality.*



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## Promoting Agency: Opportunities and Challenges

Abeer Okaz

(Pharos University in Alexandria)

Review by Maria Diakou

### Abstract

*Since March 2020 and particularly during remote teaching, most language teachers felt anxious and outside their comfort zone; and thus, sought continuous support and sympathy. Similarly, many undergraduate students were lost and built an attitude towards self-directed instruction. They were simply unable to learn L2 remotely. As a result, there were significant dropouts. Others rarely attended classes or acted passively when they attended. These, among many more, were post-pandemic challenges that Pharos University English Language Centre's educational team had to think about. Now, and after almost a year and a half now, it is evident that going back 100% to F2F teaching will not be happening soon and blended learning is here to stay. Ironically, the pandemic was a catalyst and wake-up call. For these reasons, the English Language Centre's educational team felt it was high time they built up their resilience, equipped teachers with survival skills and got their students engaged. This presentation will briefly highlight the challenges faced by the ELC, mainly focusing on changes adopted to encourage more engagement and inclusion, and to provide an opportunity for students to be more agentive.*

In his insightful talk on the challenges and opportunities in Language Learning created during the pandemic, Abeer Okaz talks about her experience and, most specifically, the results of a study on how the pandemic has affected students and language learning.

She starts her talk by analyzing a survey she shared with her students to check their engagement and attendance during the pandemic. She compares attendance sheets from before and after the pandemic being online on the blackboard dashboard to see how many students participated and attended.

She analyses how challenging and different speaking and writing are from before the pandemic, noting that a teacher needs to think differently since he/she can't insist on doing things the way they used to. She also mentions both students and teachers complaining about the pressure of staying home and being unable to go out and socialize. All these changes created several questions leading to necessary changes that had to be followed for planning online lessons delivered on blackboard.

What was essential, according to Abeer, was thinking of how lessons would promote and not kill creativity allowing room for mistakes and opportunities for discussion. Furthermore, she notes how important it is to focus on online sessions making sure that students are ready to accept changes in content delivery. So both teachers and students need to accept the changes in how we deliver lessons online, making sure that our students are developing positive behaviors and attitudes toward learning to consider when planning online lessons.

Abeer moves on, noting that to develop 21st-century skills, someone has to be open to mistakes. That is why if students keep being worried and afraid of making mistakes or getting lower marks, they will not speak and develop the language they are trying to learn, ending up just studying for the exams. Teachers must help students manage their stress, which is very important during online learning. Teachers also have to help their students to develop those skills that are necessary for their life. Promoting positive thinking is important, and "practice smart" finding activities that interest our students to motivate them.



### **Biodata**

**Abeer Okaz** is Pharos University in Alexandria Director of Studies. She is a teacher, teacher trainer, CELTA tutor, NILE DELTA Module 2 TP tutor, and freelance Educational and Training Development Consultant at IH Cairo. She has 23 years of experience, ten of which involved strategic and organizational management, and training in higher education. She has published in international journals and done training in Ireland, the USA, Saudi Arabia, Kyiv, South Africa and Egypt. Abeer has been presenting in international conferences since 2007. Her professional special interests are teacher training, materials development, strategic and organizational management, ICT and working closely with teachers. Abeer was a guest speaker in the 4th International Conference on Advanced Research in Teaching and Education, Budapest, Hungary, 2021.

## Affordances and constraints of mobile devices used in adult refugees, asylum-seekers and immigrants

Caterina Skiniotou

Review by Vicky Saumell

### Abstract

*In this session, Caterina shares her experience teaching adults who have been forcibly displaced before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. Such groups of students are highly motivated to develop 21st Century skills, primarily collaboration, communication, information and media literacies, as well as social skills in multicultural societies while, at the same time, acquiring English as a Foreign Language. However, their progress and achievement are negatively impacted not only by the displacement trauma, but also by the lack of resources and familiarity with synchronous and asynchronous online modalities, which resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, Caterina followed a multi-access model where some students attended synchronous classes face-to-face, while others interacted with their peers via web conferencing (synchronous online). All students have had access to a LMS that serves as an open-access materials repository and communication-collaboration platform. The 2020-21 lockdown deprived us of the face-to-face modality. Moreover, most students can only rely on mobile devices to access materials, collaborate on projects, present their work in documents, slideshows and videos. After a brief description of her student population and the learning/teaching situation, Caterina will present the issues I have had to deal with while transitioning from the four-level to the three-level model and the solutions my students, peers and I came up with. These solutions are based on pedagogical adaptations to the three-level modality using mobile devices. They include, but are not limited to, free resources for designing mobile-friendly interactive materials, planning and implementing synchronous and asynchronous pair and group interaction and collaboration, and developing information and media skills while building learning portfolios.*

### The context

Caterina introduced her talk by introducing the participants of the experience she was presenting about. She met them through an NGO, who would provide language classes to them, among other things. They had had to leave their home by force. They had been displaced by war or poverty and were temporarily living in Greece. They were between 18 and 60 years old and were from various cultures, religions and educational backgrounds.

When Caterina met them, there were a few things she didn't know: their background knowledge, skills, and competences, how they would be assessed. There had never been a needs analysis, no goals set, and learning outcomes planned.

Even before Caterina joined the project, in 2015 the number of refugees had increased and a number of NGOs decided that they needed to support their needs, but did not know exactly how. One of their decisions was to offer language classes in English so that they would be able to fill in forms, understand where they wanted to go, etc. The materials used were open access, both readily available or redesigned and published under a Creative Commons License.

In 2020, the pandemic happened and the need to go online was urgent. So they tried to retain the synchronous communication and add asynchronous instances bearing in mind that participants had access through mobile phones with different capabilities. As the classes moved online, the number of female participants increased and also the locations from where participants were accessing the classes. The participants did not have to use their devices' cameras and could access digital copies of the materials.



In 2021, they could go back to face-to-face classes but that meant leaving out those who lived in remote areas or had already relocated to another country but were still taking classes. So they decided to go hybrid...

### Synchronous sessions

The adjustments needed to make the hybrid synchronous class happen included equipment and teachers with effective management strategies.

In terms of equipment, they needed two computers and two webcams (one to be used by the teacher, the other to connect the students), clip-on mics, a projector, wifi, good speakers. In terms of teachers, most were not prepared for this.

But then, the majority of participants preferred to take the class online. On students' request they tried different tools (Zoom, Meet, Teams) but ended up deciding to use Zoom.

Some constraints regarding dynamic assessment happened with students working from their phones as opposed to those working from computers, and from the difficulty of assessing students who would not turn on their cameras. Screen sharing also posed difficulties for those

working from their phones. Breakout rooms were popular, but collaboration was often problematic.

Some favourite tools they used were Genially for interactive games, and LearningApps.org for assessing reading.

### Asynchronous sessions

For the asynchronous instances, they focused on low bandwidth resources. They used Google Workspace for Education, Google Classroom, Google Tools and a Reading Library on Genially.

Participants were encouraged to create a glossary on Google Sheets that would automatically translate words into the participants' language, even if offline.

In Google Classroom, work was organized weekly.

### Other issues

- They discovered that attendance can never be mandatory.
- They focused on assessment for learning through task-based learning.
- Gamification was found to work well with younger participants.

### Final considerations

Although the program was effective and the use of mobile devices was a solution, they feel they still miss a lot of the support that can be offered face to face.

### Biodata

*Caterina Skiniotou has served, since 1981, the field of Education as a teacher, teacher educator, curriculum designer and developer, materials developer, teacher education program director and Foundation program director. Her interests include technology-assisted learning and teaching, innovation in instructional design, content-based language instruction, English-Medium instruction (EMI) and lifelong learning.*

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## Experiences in delivering hybrid classes: Instructing remote and in-person students in the same synchronous session

Gemma Peacock

Review by Abeer Okaz

### Abstract

*Small cohort numbers for the autumn 2021 Pre-session English course at the International Study and Language Institute (ISLI) at the University of Reading meant that it was not feasible to run two separate classes: one fully online with remote students and one blended with on-campus students. As a result, teachers in ISLI ran a pilot of hybrid teaching, where in-person students and remote students studied together in the same synchronous session for both Reading and Writing classes, and Listening and Speaking classes. These classes took place in a campus classroom, with an in-person teacher and students joining remote students via a Teams meeting.*

*In this interactive session I will share my teaching experiences in this style, from both pedagogical and technological perspectives, to include information about the different tools and technology that can be used in the classroom and online to achieve effective hybrid teaching. Suggestions on good practice for ensuring that remote students and in-person students can communicate together in the same class during a variety of different tasks to facilitate language learning and skills development will also be discussed.*

*Activities trialed using this hybrid teaching method include:*

- *Pair-work and plenary*
- *Group discussions*
- *Presentations (individual and group)*
- *Teacher-fronted activities (lecture-style)*
- *Collaborative group-work activities*

*This session will also touch on some perceived limitations and successes of hybrid teaching from our perspective. Finally, teacher experiences of practically managing hybrid classes, and student experiences (both remote and in-person) will also be discussed.*

Gemma discusses her experience delivering language classes using the hybrid and hybrid flex models at the University of Portsmouth. Gemma starts her talk by clarifying the hybrid flex model she used to teach her classes. This model is when there are in-person students in class with remote students attending at the same time from home. This model was based on pilot work done last year in the fall. The teaching context focused on EAP (English for Academic purposes), helping students to pursue their academic studies in the university. Due to the low enrollment, Gemma felt that the hybrid flex model worked best. The classes included a reading and writing component as well as a listening and speaking component. Gemma highlighted that the university allowed hybrid classes in three conditions: teachers must have prior knowledge and experience working with hybrid learning, teachers have the necessary audio and visual equipment and have the expertise without external support to deliver the content successfully through this mode.



### How did this model work

Gemma referenced the earlier talk when there was a live example of the owl, which actually looks like a real owl. It has a scanning camera that has a 360 rotation that follows and tracks the teacher's voice. The owl ensured that students who are at home have a sense of what is taking place in the classroom. There would be two screens: one for the teacher and the other for the smart board. In person students connected to their own devices by logging into Teams so that they could connect with the online students, which promoted a lot for interaction and communication. Smartphone features made it easy for the online students to get the feel of the actual classroom. The best part of this experience was having a three-way communication as everyone can talk and see everyone. It made the class as if all students were in the same place. The teachers encouraged group and paired presentations with (in person students together or in person students and online ones). The teachers could also integrate online activities on Kahoot for example as well as screen share activities on Xerte and finally differentiation tasks.

### Questions brought up during the pilot

1. Can remote students actually participate as fully as they need to achieve in all the activities? Gemma doubted a full engagement except with the Owl as part of the teaching context.
2. How can teachers monitor the engagement of remote students and at the same time comprehension of the in person students? Gemma confirms that is natural to go move towards in-person students but teachers tried to establish a balance

Gemma presented the other teachers' perspectives towards the hyper flex model: one column focused on the issues and the other on the successes. Some of the issues included setting up technology and troubleshooting issues; besides managing remote students in an equitable manner and the time required to plan lessons suitable for such a complex model as well as the cognitive load to handle all that at the same time. On the other hand, there were successes such as being able to deliver a variety of activities and ensuring attention to all students and helping small classes run smoothly. Gemma recommended a lot of teacher training to ensure the process works better next time they try that experience.

## Recommendations

Gemma presented some recommendations to put into consideration:

1. Very low number of remote students can integrate with in-person students using hybrid flex approach
2. Larger remote students classes should be taught separately from in-person students to ensure better learning experience
3. Teachers delivering the hybrid approach need training and support
4. Hybrid approach to be used as a temporary and short-term solution only
5. More feedback and data is needed

She finished her talk by suggesting separating classes even though hybrid learning will continue to be in use for students who can not make it to classes (Chinese students for example). She is collaborating with another colleague, who is working in a different context. She also shared the Hybrid Teaching and Learning group on Teams so teachers who are using this model or similar ones can communicate and share experiences.

## Biodata

**Gemma Peacock** received her MA in TESOL and Applied Linguistics from the University of Portsmouth in 2021 and is currently studying for an EdD (Doctor of Education). She has lectured in English for Academic Purposes at the University of Reading since 2019. She previously taught at BPP University and Durham University, both in the UK. She is currently the Reading component coordinator of the Pre-sessional English year-round course at the University of Reading. Gemma has a keen interest in pedagogical and technological innovation with international students, particularly in the field of EAP. Her research interests include teacher-student rapport in online learning environments, and hybrid teaching and learning.



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## From Emergency Online Teaching to Hybrid to the future of ELT

Joanna Paolinelli

Review by Belén Albarracín

### Abstract

*I would like to share my experience of both hybrid, synchronous, or asynchronous online teaching over the past two years. Although I have faced many challenges, I believe that the future will bring more use of hybrid teaching and we must be prepared. I would like to show my best practices and where I think the future of language learning is taking us. Our students want flexibility and choice. Covid has taught us new ways of adapting and students now accept that it is possible to learn online and are more capable of taking responsibility for their learning. This includes learning from e-learning platforms, video lessons in addition to online lessons with a teacher. I am excited to share what I have learnt over the past few years and what I think the future will hold!*

The PCE presentation by Joanna Paolinelli analyses the transition, challenges and overcoming of obstacles when it comes to the integration of technology during the pandemic and how teachers bridged the worlds of the in class and online students.

In her presentation, Joanna talks about the transition from in person to online lessons which was smooth and right away. In her case, the schools went online in a very short time due to the digital platform and the ebooks they were already using. It became an online school 'overnight' with an increasingly high demand of online students.



She shared the experience of emergency hybrid adopted by schools and how lessons were casted with a camera, and screen, opting for a low-cost option.

She invited the audience to participate and share their experience about the challenges they faced when going hybrid. One of the teachers talked about the juggling of teachers during these lessons and how she detected there had been a shift back to teacher-centred lessons. Joanna referred to this challenge of caring for both students who were online and in class and one option they found to deal with this situation was to do pair work or group work with in-class students and breakout rooms with online students.

She provided some examples of interaction with hybrid students and teacher and class participation. For instance, the activity *Guess what's in the bag*, with the teacher calling on online and in class students. She made a point of using the camera to address online and in class students. Another example was how they fostered interaction within in-class and online students in their lessons through Group Work.

Teenagers living in remote places preferred going hybrid and were keen on sustaining these online lessons rather than in presence according to a feedback survey carried out.

Joanna introduced as well the use of Speaking AI platforms for interactions between students and avatars for those students who were online so that they could practise fluency creating authentic conversations. She also mentioned the use of an LMS where teachers uploaded content such as videos and the AI algorithms changed that into gamified exercises.

When it comes to the future and what's next after the pandemic, Joanna refers to VR (Virtual Reality) for Language Learning. In fact, learning through experience integrates the complete body response. For instance, what the student who is wearing the headset sees is casted onto the screen and the other students, whether they are in class or online, can follow and work collaboratively to help him solve tasks. Virtual Reality Learn by doing, resorting to Task based Learning motivates students to participate collaboratively (VR4ll Free Project).

She then refers to the Metaverse where students can meet in a virtual environment through avatars, learning from remote places or visit a virtual classroom and generate “real” life situations. Students can be online or in a classroom and decide to “teleport” as an avatar to another place, for instance China or another planet.

At the very end of her presentation, Joanna poses the question to all teachers about how they feel about the prospect of Future Virtual classrooms. Is this going to be the new trend in teaching and learning? Shall we start considering new spaces for interactions? Has this been fostered by the pandemic? An interesting question to consider.

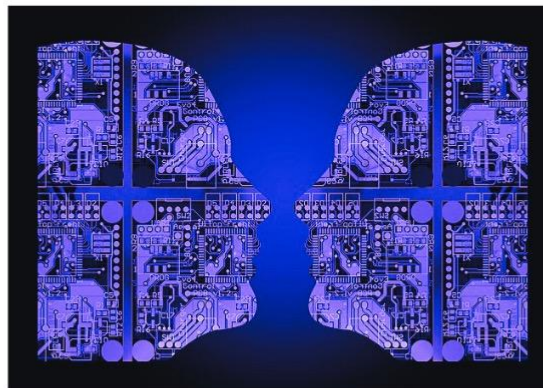
## Biodata

*Joanna Paolinelli is the Director of economic growth and innovation at the British School Pisa. In addition, she is the Director of the Online Division of the company. In this role, she has introduced into the company the management platform Amber, a booking system and shop online, and the hybrid teaching system, which has been vital during the pandemic. During lockdown, she administered the teaching online of over 2,000 students every week. She is also the AISLi academic coordinator. Joanna has an MSC in psychological research methods and a Masters in Educational Psychology. She is a teacher trainer and speaker on inclusive teaching. She regularly collaborates with book publishers and exam boards on the problems that dyslexia can cause in language learning and, in 2019, was invited to speak at the ADRIES conference in Croatia. At present Joanna is also project manager for two important Erasmus projects, one of which involves creating a digital placement test in five different languages.*



## JOINT WEBINAR:

Does technology change the way we think about talk?



**SARA HOWELL AND  
LISA KESTER-DODGSON**

October 22nd at 4pm UK time

**Tech it easy!**  
**Focus on NEARPOD**  
**Letizia Cinganotto**

**Nearpod** is a free platform which can foster language learning and teaching by integrating a wide range of webtools. It has become very popular during the pandemic as a great facilitation for remote and hybrid teaching. In fact, it is possible to choose among a lot of templates for games, activities, interactive lessons and the final output is a self-consistent digital content to be delivered through a “live participation” mode, guided by the teacher, possibly sharing the content through a IWB or through a “student-paced mode”, which is perfect for a flipped learning approach, allowing the teacher to follow and monitor the students’ progress.

Nearpod can provide real-time insights into student understanding through interactive lessons, interactive videos, and gamification, as detailed on the website:

*Interactive lessons*

You can use the vetted, premade interactive lessons already in the Nearpod Library or bring in existing resources and customize them to create engaging lessons that students love.

*Interactive videos*

You can make videos into active learning experiences by adding questions to any video uploaded to Nearpod or choose from our library of 10,200+ videos with standards-aligned questions built-in.

*Game-based learning*

You can up the engagement in the classroom, while assessing students’ understanding with learning games.

*Formative assessment*

You can get real-time insights into student learning with nine types of formative assessments within Nearpod.

*Rich media*

You can add rich media like VR Field Trips, 3D models, PhET Interactive Simulations and more to take learning to another level!

*Lessons for every subject*

Access 22,000+ customizable, standards-aligned lessons, videos, and activities built with trusted partners.

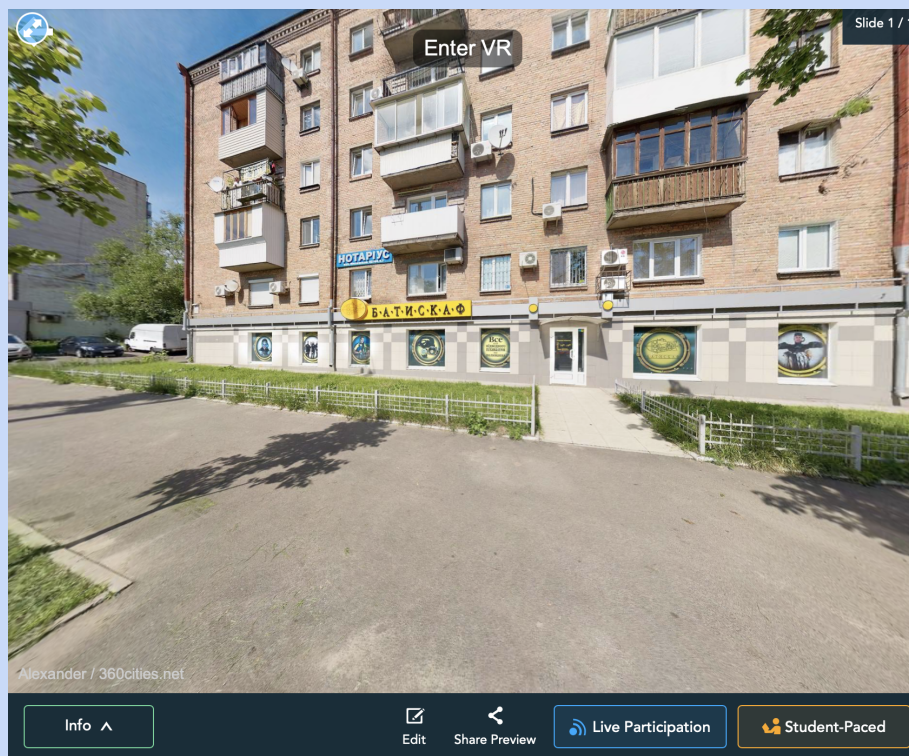


□ *21st century content*

Option to include premium content such as Social & Emotional Learning, Digital Citizenship & Literacy, and English Learners to meet school & district priorities.

Among the different functions, particularly effective is the Virtual Field Trip: thanks to the 360cities.net webtool which is embedded into Nearpod, it is possible to choose among a great number of locations, where students can move in 3D, pretending to be there and go sightseeing, living an immersive deep learning experience.

In the image below an example of a virtual field trip to a city is presented: students can be guided to observe and reflect on what they see. They can use TV news, newspaper articles and other media documenting the area. The discussion in class can be followed by other participatory activities such as quizzes, digital boards to share sticky-notes, simulations or other interactive activities which can help develop the four modes of communication (production, interaction, reception, mediation) and foster deep learning.



**Interview with Marzia Tollari,  
a primary school teacher in Italy on the use of Hyperdocs**

**Letizia Cinganotto**



**Biodata**

Marzia Tollari has been a primary school teacher since 2005 and has been teaching English to kids and adults in public and private schools in Italy since 1998. She lived in England for almost two years and she got 4 Certificates from the FIRST to the Proficiency Cambridge Certificate. Her attitudes and studies have always been focused on inclusion and on the most fragile children and people. She loves traveling and meeting people and she is passionate about languages.

Marzia Tollari is a primary school teacher in Modena, Italy. She teaches at “Istituto Comprensivo 3” led by Daniele Barca, which is a very innovative, dynamic and techy school. She has been using Hyperdocs with her pupils during remote and hybrid teaching linked to the pandemic.

Hyperdocs is a very flexible format, allowing teachers to link and collect digital resources, tasks and activities on GoogleDoc or OneNote, as shown in the template below: Marzia has expressed her ideas and opinions about the use of Hyperdocs with her pupils, providing answers to the for the following questions:

## 1. Can you tell us something about your experience with Hyperdocs with your children during the pandemic?

During the pandemic, the school and the teachers had to adapt to a very new situation. Technologies definitely helped and supported us. I used Hyperdocs and my students really liked it.

I decided the TOPIC to focus on, for example FAMILY, DAILY ROUTINES, FREE TIME ACTIVITIES, ROOMS in the HOUSE, EASTER FESTIVAL and I started from a Storytelling recorded with images, words and short videos (Engage phase); I added interactive materials such as songs, learning apps games, and videos (Explore phase) and gave a practical example (Explain/Apply phase). I involved the children and their families in motivating activities so that they could express themselves with creativity and also using their hands “Mani in pasta”.

Then the children shared their products through different media (Sharing phase):

- email
- padlet
- google drive
- google documents
- classroom
- videos

According to the idea of personalisation of the learning process, a feedback was sent to every child by email (Evaluation phase) following these criteria:

- commitment
- creativity
- originality/authenticity
- autonomy.

## 2. Do you think Hyperdocs can be a valuable tool for remote and hybrid language learning and teaching? Why? Can you comment on that?

I think Hyperdocs is a very valuable tool for remote and hybrid language learning and teaching, because it gives the opportunity to students and also to teachers to express themselves, throughout the different phases (1.Engage; 2.Explore; 3.Explain/Apply; 4.Share; 5.Evaluation), enhancing their Multiple Intelligences.

Teachers can “scaffold” the learning process taking advantage of a wide range of tools and students can re-invent, re-create, re-make, change, improve, re-construct their assignments following their ideas, formulating new ones and experimenting or discovering new attitudes and skills using different tools.

### 3. Can you mention the main lessons learnt from this experience?

This experience taught us, educators, that during an emergency, an unplanned event, children and adults may react in different and unexpected ways.

Children experiencing difficulties in class, during “traditional” daily routines definitely bloomed like flowers at home: they had the chance to express themselves in their own way, they didn’t have to work according to institutional school times/schedules, they could use different tools, technologies, hands, music....

In many cases they became examples for their classmates, sometimes encouraging them, in case they felt demotivated.

On the other hand, children who were used to traditional class activities, feeling “competent” and “confident”, sometimes felt “lost” as they missed their daily routines...they needed time to re-adapt to the new situation and to learn how to work differently.

Another important lesson I learnt from this experience is that using technologies, families can watch and be actively involved in their children’s learning process: they can really see how we work at school, how we interact with children, sharing, cooperating and trusting each other.



**2023 LTSIG and LitSIG Joint PCE**  
**TechLit! Exploring crossovers between technology and literature**

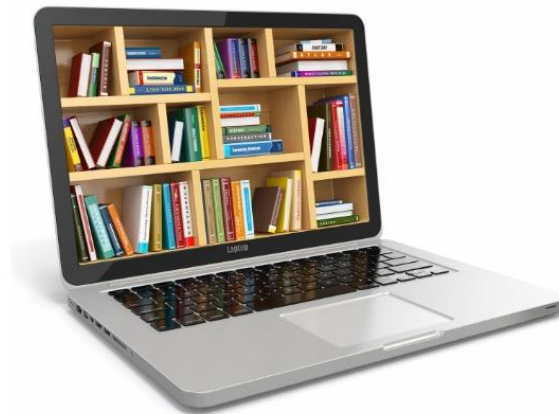
**Abstract**

*Our two SIGs aim to share ideas and best practices in incorporating technologically-advanced techniques in teaching literature and in using literature to teach language. The day promises to be hands-on and interactive. We will have two plenary sessions: the first focuses on how technology can help the enjoyment and study of literature and the second focuses on how technology can enable students to produce various literary genres (spoken and written) in the EFL classroom. Each plenary will be followed by practical presentations relevant to the overarching topics of the two plenaries, concerning literature and technology in language learning.*



**JOINT PCE 2023:**  
**TECHLIT!**

Exploring crossovers between  
technology and literature



**HARROGATE-APRIL 17TH**

## The LTSIG Committee



**Vicky Saumell** is a teacher, trainer, consultant and materials developer from Buenos Aires, Argentina. She works as a teacher but does a lot of freelance and volunteer work. She is currently the Coordinator but has been a volunteer for IATEFL LTSIG since 2013. She has been involved in learning technologies for 15 years and is a proud Webhead! But she also has a wide experience in project-based learning and creativity. When she's not working, she enjoys reading, cooking for family and friends, taking care of her four pets, and tending to her edible garden, which she started during the pandemic. She travels a lot (or rather, used to...) but still lives in the same neighbourhood where she was born

**Dr. Maria Diakou** is currently working as a Deputy Head for Cyprus Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, and Youth and is a part-time lecturer at the University of Nicosia. She is a Consulting Member of the MA in CALL committee of the Cyprus University of Technology. She has been teaching English as a foreign language for 27 years. She holds a Master's in Applied Linguistics and a Doctorate in Education. She is currently the Chair of CyTEA (Cyprus Teachers of English Association), and Events Coordinator of IATEFL LTSIG (Learning Technologies Special Interest Group). She has authored articles on EFL early language learning, technology, and multicultural education. Her research interests are on technology and language learning and multicultural education

**Belen Albarracin** is a Teacher of English from Argentina. She is an ICT Facilitator at Bayard School and teaches the subject Global Perspectives in Middle School. She is a Sworn Translator and an e-learning Specialist. She is an advocate of the meaningful integration of technology to enhance language learning. She has presented at several international Conferences including IATEFL and was awarded the Robert O'Neil Scholarship for her Project "Technology in Service" in 2018 and an LTSIG travel grant to the CyTEA Conference in Cyprus to talk about the integration of Virtual Reality in the classroom that same year. She joined the Committee in 2021 in her role as Webmaster. She is into immersive technologies, 360° editing and the metaverse.

**Letizia Cinganotto** currently teaches language teaching at University for Foreigners of Perugia, Italy, former Senior Researcher at INDIRE (National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research), Italy. She holds a PhD in Linguistics and recently achieved the national qualification as an associate professor of language teaching. She has far-reaching experience in continuous professional development for teachers, teacher trainers, head teachers (e-learning courses, blended courses, on the job, workshops, webinars, conferences, etc.). She is a reviewer and a member of the Editorial Board of various peer-reviewed journals. She has published articles in national and international journals and five books on CLIL. She is involved in different working groups and committees at national and international level.

**Serrana Muniz** is a Uruguayan teacher of English who has specialized in education and technology. She has taught English and Digital Literacies at primary and secondary school levels and has had coordination and teacher training roles for large scale projects involving pedagogical uses of learning technologies. At the moment, she is one of the Master Teachers of the online teaching programme English Without Borders Colombia. She's also interested in critical pedagogies and environmental literacy. She's been a member of the LTSIG since 2013 and was awarded the Diana Eastment Roving Reporter scholarship to attend IATEFL 2019. She joined the committee in 2021. When she isn't working, you can find her trekking the southern Argentinian mountains, playing football or tending to the community vegetable garden.

**Abeer Okaz** is the Director of Studies and Educational Consultant at Pharos University in Alexandria. She is a teacher trainer, CELTA tutor, and a DELTA Module 2 TP tutor. She is a NILE and TransformELT consultant. She has 23 years of experience, ten of which focused on strategic and organizational management, and training in higher education. She has published in *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *Humanizing Language Teaching* and the *Journal of Teaching with Technology*. and done training in Ireland, the USA, Saudi Arabia, Kyiv and South Africa. Abeer has been presenting in international conferences since 2007. Her professional special interests are teacher training, materials development, strategic and organizational management, ICT and teaching with technology. Abeer loves traveling and trying out new recipes. She enjoys family gatherings and she is into plants recently.

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