

# MATEFL

Malta Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language

## NEWSLETTER

**Words! Words! Words!**

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**The SIGNificance of  
Special Interest Groups**

Jean Theuma

**Being a (Non-)Native  
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**Lesson Share** Adrian Theuma

**Teacher 2.0 Videos**

Natasha Fabri

**Why not try...CLL?**

Matt Done



MATEFL is an organisation run on a volunteer basis by teachers for teachers of English as a foreign language. It is dedicated to the professional development of its members by facilitating the sharing and exchanging of ideas and keeping abreast of new developments in the EFL world.

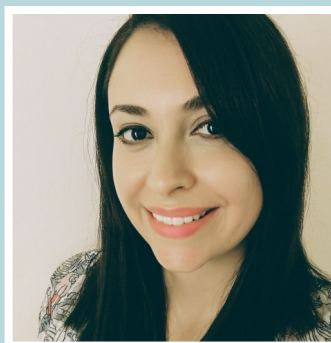
**June 2018**

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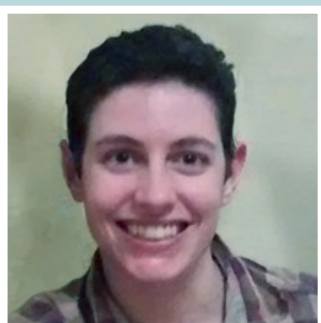
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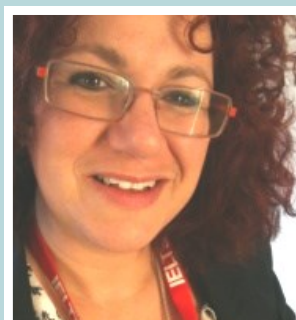
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Would you like to have your ideas published in the newsletter? Contact us!



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Hello TEFLers,

Welcome to the latest edition of the MATEFL newsletter! As always, this edition is jam-packed with lots of interesting articles related to all things ELT.

To start off, Alan Marsh has some fun with words, and puts the spotlight on the wonderful world of alliteration. Jean Theuma then gives us the lowdown on SIGs (special interest groups), and MATEFL's efforts to start some of its own.

Matt Done talks about Community Language Learning (CLL) in this month's edition of 'Why not try...?', while Natasha Fabri provides us with ideas on using videos in her regular feature 'Teacher 2.0'.

Adrian Theuma then talks us through a motivating lesson using word dominoes, and Chris Keszthelyi weighs in on the 'native vs non-native teacher' debate.

Finally, in this month's Vox Pop, Natasha Fabri talks to some of our members about their experience of teaching English abroad.

We hope you enjoy this month's issue. Have a great summer of teaching!

Matt & Tash

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## The MATEFL committee



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# Words! Words! Words! 1: Topsy-turvy riffraff

By Alan Marsh



Do you know how many words there are in English? Well, it depends on what you count (and what you don't) but most commentators agree on a number somewhere around the million mark.

Phew, that's quite a lot! But don't worry, as it's estimated that most educated native speakers have a lexicon (the number of words they know) of about twenty thousand words. And to survive in English, you probably need a basic lexicon of about two thousand words.

But where do all these words come from? Well, from a variety of sources, including words from other languages, but we'll look at these in future blogs. This month we'll have a look at a special kind of word that seems to be made up 'out of the blue' but actually often comes from the human taste for playing with words. After all, isn't that the basis of most of literature, especially of poetry - and now that Bob Dylan's been awarded the Nobel Prix for Literature, perhaps we can add song lyrics too.

**This playful propensity for repeating syllables and/or consonants...are clever uses of the technique known as 'alliteration.'**

## Rhymes and rhythms

Children, of course, love playing with words: here are a couple of excerpts from children's rhymes in English:

*Georgy Porgy came out to play  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall  
Jack and Jill went up the hill  
Eeny meeny miny moh  
Hickery dickory dock  
Incy wincy spider climbed up the waterspout*

You'll probably know some or all of these rhymes, and if you don't, try googling them to find out how they continue. Ah, googling, another new word!

These examples of this playful propensity for repeating syllables, vowel sounds and/or consonants

within and among words are clever uses of the technique known as 'alliteration'. The word is derived from the Latin word 'latira', meaning 'the letters of the alphabet' and examples have been around a long time. Perhaps the first recorded instance in English is the great eighth-century Anglo-Saxon poem Beowulf:

*Hot-hearted Beowulf was bent upon battle*

Here's Shakespeare playing with alliteration in Romeo and Juliet:

*From forth the fatal loins of these two foes  
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life*

Can you see and hear the repetition of the sound 'f' and's'? The effect is to give the lines a musical rhythm, which becomes an almost hypnotic rhythm, in fact, in Samuel Taylor's The Rime of the Ancient Mariner:

*The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow followed free;*

*We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea.*

## Catchy and cool

But it's not only in poetry that we find alliteration: it's all around us. Alliteration helps to make a name catchy and memorable and many famous actors are known by names that are alliterative (and many were made up): Charlie Chaplin, Marilyn Monroe, Ronald Reagan, Robert Redford, Nick Nolte and Silvester Stallone, to name just a few.

Because alliteration helps to make words memorable, we see examples in advertising slogans everywhere:

*You'll never put a better bit of butter on your knife.*  
(advertising slogan for Country Life butter)

*The daily diary of the American dream.* (a slogan of The Wall Street Journal)

And of course brand names abound (there we go again!):

*Dunkin' Donuts    PayPal    Coca-Cola*

*The Horse and Hound (pub)*

### Testing times with teenagers

What I find particularly interesting is that this playful ploy is carried on into adulthood and there are many expressions, adjectives, adverbs and nouns which use this feature of English, especially in informal, everyday English. By the way, apart from the highlighted examples, this article is littered with alliteration (get it?). Have you noticed any? We actually use them quite frequently, often without even realising we're doing it! Can you see any in this (slightly contrived) transcript of a conversation I had with my teenage daughter some time ago? Clue: there are three.

*Alan: Amy, your room's such a mess!*

*Amy: What do you mean?*

*Alan: Look, everything's topsy-turvy. Your clothes are all over the floor and those in the drawers are just chucked in higgledy-piggledy, with no rhyme or reason.*

*Amy: [Censored!!!!]*

**What I find particularly interesting is that this playful ploy is carried on into adulthood.**

If you're still not sure about the meanings, look them up on any dictionary website.

Finally, think about these questions: what would your answers be? Better still, why not discuss them with a colleague?

### Over to you

Many of these expressions are compounds, where the second part repeats a sound in the first part. Here are a few endings of such compounds: do you know or can you guess what the first part might be? Don't peek at the answers below!

bustle drum    jumbo    hush    raff    nilly  
Turvy    duddy    panky    dally    piggedy

So here are the answers: do you know what they mean and how they're used?

hustle and bustle    humdrum    mumbo-jumbo    hush-hush    ruffraff    willy-nilly    topsy-turvy    fuddy-duddy    hanky-panky    dilly-dally    higgledy-piggledy

Now try this exercise for clarification:

### Fill in the gaps (without looking back!)

- The books were stacked **higgledy-** \_\_\_\_\_ on the shelves.
- She doesn't like the countryside because she misses the **hustle and** \_\_\_\_\_ of the big city.
- The whole affair was very **hush** \_\_\_\_\_ - no-one knew about it until it was over.
- The government's **topsy-**\_\_\_\_\_ priorities mean that spending on education remains low.
- There was a bit of **hanky---** \_\_\_\_\_ going on at the Christmas party.
- She warned her son to keep away from such **riff---** \_\_\_\_\_.
- Don't **dilly-**\_\_\_\_\_ - just get your things and let's go!
- They think I'm an old **fuddy-**\_\_\_\_\_ because I don't approve of tattoos.
- You don't believe in horoscopes and all that **mumbo-**\_\_\_\_\_, do you?
- Most of the work is fairly **hum--**\_\_\_\_\_.
- Don't use your credit card **willy-**\_\_\_\_\_.

- 1. Is any room in your house often topsy-turvy?*
- 2. Do you like the hustle and bustle of big cities? Or do you prefer a slower pace of life?*
- 3. Would you say there's a lot of riff-raff in the area you live in?*
- 4. Do you dilly-dally before making a decision?*
- 5. Would you say you're a bit of a fuddy-duddy?*
- 6. Is your work fairly humdrum? Or is there quite a bit of variety?*

We'll look at a few more of these in our next article. Until then, stay serene, keep cool, take your time and while away your time with lovely alliterative language!

Toodle-oo!

**Alan Marsh**

## The SIGnificance of Special Interest Groups

by Jean Theuma



**MATEFL is actively encouraging the creation and running of Special Interest Groups (SIGs).**

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are organized collections of teachers who share a common interest in a particular type of student, method of teaching or type of teaching resource. The International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL) have large variety of SIGs under their wing, such as Business English, Inclusive Practices, Leadership and Management, Learner Autonomy, Learning Technologies, and Young Learners.

Following the success of the SIGs held in IATEFL, MATEFL thought it would be a good idea to encourage the creation of SIGs locally. MATEFL

members will be able to extend the benefits they have with the main association by forming smaller, more specific groups of like-minded individuals to share, discuss and develop their interest in a particular field of EFL teaching.

**Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are organized collections of teachers who share a common interest...**

Currently, no SIGs have been created and so the first step in this process is for MATEFL to facilitate the creation of new Special Interest Groups. To this end, a SIG coordinator within the MATEFL committee will be appointed in the coming months to oversee, guide

and mentor groups of EFL professionals who wish to form a SIG. So, if you are part of a group of people who would like to start a SIG here is a list of things you should start with...

⇒ A written petition will have to be prepared and forwarded to the SIG coordinator. This petition



Photo by Natasha Fabri

should be written by at least 3 fully paid up members of MATEFL and should contain:

- ⇒ The name and focus of the SIG
- ⇒ Reason for setting up the SIG
- ⇒ The aims of the SIG and the rationale which should correspond to MATEFL's aims and objectives.
- ⇒ A list of signatures from MATEFL members who agree in principle to the formation of the SIG. The list should contain the signatures of at least 10% of MATEFL membership at the time of writing the petition.

The current membership of MATEFL is around 200 teachers, so a list of 20 signatures will be required for now. To be clear, these are not necessarily people who want to join the SIG; they are merely people who agree that it sounds like a good idea. The assistance of the SIG coordinator can be requested during the process of writing the petition to make it easier. However, it is not the SIG coordinator who will give approval for the SIG to run; the petition must be considered and approved by the MATEFL committee.

Once approval has been given, the people who initiated the petition should find members and organize membership for their SIG. The first SIG meeting should be held within 3 months of

acceptance by the MATEFL committee and should include the election of the SIG committee.

In the same way that MATEFL has an elected committee, the SIG should also have a committee made up of at least 3 roles: Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

The SIG committee should then be elected every 2 years during the SIG's own Annual General Meeting. The SIG will be required to hold at least 3 meetings per year, of which at least one should be face-to-face.

**The SIG should also have a committee made up of at least 3 roles: Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.**

SIGs will run autonomously but, although they have the role of Treasurer on their committee, they will not handle membership fees. Members will be required to pay a small annual membership fee which will be collected by MATEFL. Should the SIG need any funding, for example to run an event or advertise for membership, the Treasurer will need to request this funding from the MATEFL committee.

In the coming months further information will become available on the MATEFL website. In the meantime, any MATEFL members wishing to initiate a SIG can contact me on the following email address: [jeantheuma@hotmail.com](mailto:jeantheuma@hotmail.com).

## Join IATEFL!

Membership with IATEFL offers you:

- Contact with EFL teachers around the world
- An annual conference and exhibition at membership rates
- An opportunity to join any of the 15 Special Interest Groups (SIGS)
- Discounted periodicals
- IATEFL Voices newsletter 6 times a year



MATEFL is an Associate Member of IATEFL and as such is able to offer all its members the opportunity to become an IATEFL member for only €35.00 and €23.00 for each SIG.

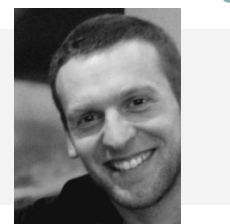
Ask for an application form, fill it in and send it to **Caroline Campbell, c/o 257, Upper St. Albert Street, Gzira, GZR1153** along with your cheque for €35.00 (plus €23.00 for each SIG you choose). Details of available SIGs are found on the application form and on the IATEFL web-site—[www.iatefl.org](http://www.iatefl.org).

*Please note that this offer is only available for MATEFL members.*

For any further information please contact Caroline Campbell, Alan Marsh or Jean Theuma at [info@matefl.org](mailto:info@matefl.org)

## Why not try... CLL?

Matt Done tells us about his experiences with Community Language Learning



A few years ago while doing some reading for an assignment, I came across something called 'Community Language Learning.' It sounded interesting, so I promised myself that I'd try it out in class as soon as the opportunity arose.

My first attempt was a little messy, but subsequent lessons seemed to work very well, and the students seemed to enjoy them. In this article, I'd like to explain what Community Language Learning is, its origins, what a lesson might look like, and some of the pros and cons of the method. My aim is to convince you to try it out in one of your own lessons!

### Some background

Community language learning (CLL) was one of a host of methods to arise from the humanistic movement in the 1970s – the same movement which gave us other fabled methods such as 'suggestopedia' and 'the silent way'. The development of these approaches was an attempt to move away from the rigid, behavioural tendencies of the past, and instead place greater emphasis on the emotional and affective aspects of the learner.

CLL was first developed by an American Jesuit priest by the name of Charles Curran, who decided that some of the principles of psychology and counselling could be successfully applied to language learning. As in psychological counselling, the method was focused on the client (or learner), and driven entirely by what they wanted to discuss.

### What might a lesson look like?

In a CLL lesson, students put away their books and pens, and gather in a circle. They are told that they are going to have a chat about whatever they like, and that their conversation will be recorded for later language work. More confident and assertive groups will probably have no trouble coming up with something to talk about, although with some classes it might help

to suggest some ideas yourself to get the ball rolling.

Once a topic has been agreed upon, one of the students volunteers to start the conversation. They have a go at saying whatever it is they want to say in the best English they can. Alternatively, they can say it in L1, providing the teacher speaks the language too. The teacher then *reformulates* what the student says into *better* English, by tidying up the grammar, bringing in more precise vocabulary, or simply making it sound more natural. (If the original sentence was in L1, the teacher simply translates this into English).

So, if the student says 'I want ask you all what you do when lesson finishes', the teacher might reformulate that to 'So, what are you all doing after class?'. The student has a few practice attempts at saying this improved version, perhaps with some feedback on pronunciation and intonation from the teacher between attempts, and when he feels ready and confident, records himself saying it – pausing the recording as soon as he's finished. The first 'line' of the conversation is now complete.

Another student in the circle then volunteers to respond, and again tells the teacher what she wants to say. Just as before, the teacher reformulates or translates, the student has a few practice attempts at saying it, and then records herself when ready, being sure to pause the recording once the utterance is complete.

This process is repeated until a whole conversation is recorded. There is no pre-determined length that the conversation must reach – you can simply stop when you think there's enough or when the students start to get tired.

What you are then left with is a recording of your students speaking *good* English, to each other, about

**Community language learning (CLL) was one of a host of methods to arise from the humanistic movement in the 1970s...**





Image from: <https://pxhere.com/en/photo/1297499> (CCO)

something *they* wanted to talk about. If you're crafty, you might also have snuck some new and interesting structures or lexis into your reformulations, meaning the dialogue will be full of further learning opportunities.

At this stage, it might be a good idea to give the students a few minutes to relax (being recorded can be stressful!) and discuss how they think the conversation went, as well as how it felt to have their voices recorded.

The recording can now be handed over to the students. They listen to it, and attempt to transcribe it as best they can. Since the students have control of the recording themselves, they are free to pause and rewind as many times as they like. The students can be asked to do this alone, or, if you prefer to stick with the 'community' theme, they can do it collaboratively.

The next day, bring in your own (correct!) transcript, and allow the students to compare their versions to yours.

**Perhaps the greatest strength of CLL is that it's driven completely by the learners.**

What you do at this stage is entirely up to you. You can either allow the class to ask questions about certain words, chunks, structures, etc, or you can decide yourself whether there is any language worth focusing on further. Here's a snippet of a dialogue that a pre-intermediate group of mine produced:

*S1: So everyone, what's your overall opinion of Malta?*

*S2: I like it on the whole. The weather's good and the people are really friendly.*

*S1: You really think the weather's good? It's way too hot for me!*

*S3: It might be hot, but in summer you can go to the beach to cool off.*

*S4: Personally, I love it. If I could, I'd live here.*

*S5: I like it here too but for me, life is more comfortable in Japan. Our toilets are so much better than the ones here. (Apparently, toilets in Japan are marvels of technology, and put basic European ones to shame).*

Looking at the text as a linguistic object now, there are a number of potentially exploitable bits of language here. You could go down the grammar route, and explore the second conditional or comparative

structures. Alternatively, you could have a closer look at some of the lexis, chunks, and patterns ('especially', 'on the whole', 'it's way/far/much too + adjective + for me, etc).

### Pros and Cons of CLL

Perhaps the greatest strength of CLL is that it's driven completely by the learners. They talk about precisely what they wish to talk about, and get instant feedback on how to say things connected to it better. As such, CLL definitely ensures that students' wants and needs are catered for.

Another positive of CLL is that it incorporates work on both fluency and accuracy. While creating a conversation (fluency) remains the key focus, the teacher's reformulations and the students' practice attempts mean that getting things right is also given importance.

CLL also involves no pre-lesson preparation, and can provide a novel and stimulating challenge for students. The audio recording and accompanying transcript that students take away can also serve as a permanent record of language and an interesting souvenir of their time in your class.

An obvious drawback of CLL is that less confident students might find being recorded intimidating. This was my greatest concern when using it in class for the first time. However, while certain students were visibly reticent at first, once the stronger students had had a go and the mechanics of the task became clear, the

quieter students emerged from their shells and jumped into the discussion.

You can, of course, counter this issue by not insisting that everyone contribute. Indeed, even passive students will benefit from hearing your reformulations, from transcribing the dialogue, and from the follow-up language work.

Another more practical issue with CLL is that it can only be used with small groups. 8 is probably the maximum number of students that this could be done with successfully – any larger and it becomes unworkable.

Finally, although there is little involved in the way of planning, this is a method which places a hefty load on the teacher. Indeed, the teacher must dash around the class from student to student, thinking on the spot about how to reformulate what students are saying into language that is correct and natural, but still not too far above their own level to make it prohibitively difficult. This can, of course, be quite challenging!

All in all, CLL is an enjoyable method to use in class. It's student-centred, interesting, and potentially very useful indeed. Why not give it a go with your own class one of these days?

**Matt Done**

*Mattdone8@gmail.com*

## Did you know?

These are a few of the words recently added to the Oxford English Dictionary for 2018. For a full list, go to: <https://bit.ly/2ISwR5d>

**Commodify**, (v.) turn into or treat as a mere commodity. "art has become commodified".

**Deglobalization** (n.) (also **Deglobalisation**) is the process of diminishing interdependence and integration between certain units around the world, typically nation-states. It is widely used to describe the periods of history when economic trade and investment between countries decline.

**Frugivore**, (adj.) a fruit eater. It can be any type of herbivore or omnivore where fruit is a preferred food type. Because approximately 20% of all mammalian herbivores also eat fruit, frugivory is common among mammals.

**Hangry** (adj.) is a clever portmanteau of hungry and angry, and an adjective that describes being irritable due to hunger.

**Mansplain** (v.) of a man) explain (something) to someone, typically a woman, in a manner regarded as condescending or patronizing.

## Teacher 2.0: Exploring 21st century teaching.

Natasha Fabri shares some practical tips about using videos in the classroom



Welcome to the latest instalment of our series! My aim for this issue is going to appeal to many of you out there. It is probably as low-tech as it can get (without it being no-tech!), so I hope you'll get to test some of these ideas out in class.

I decided to write about videos for 2 specific reasons: First, some of you may not be confident enough to use them in class, and might not be sure where to start. Second, some of you may feel stuck with the way you *normally* use them in class. The ideas I will show you are simply my take on what has worked for me and what I have seen other teachers do in class during lesson observations.

I will consider 3 genres for the sake of variety: TED Talks, music videos and video commercials. They are all easy to find online and completely free. They are also usually short so they add interest without taking up too much class time.

### TED Talks

Eagle-eyed readers might possibly remember my post from December 2015 about Presentations (follow link here for the PDF copy of that article: <https://bit.ly/2xmXk9w>) which included TED Talks. I will therefore skip a lengthy introduction and jump right into how I use the site and my favourite TED Talk-based lessons.

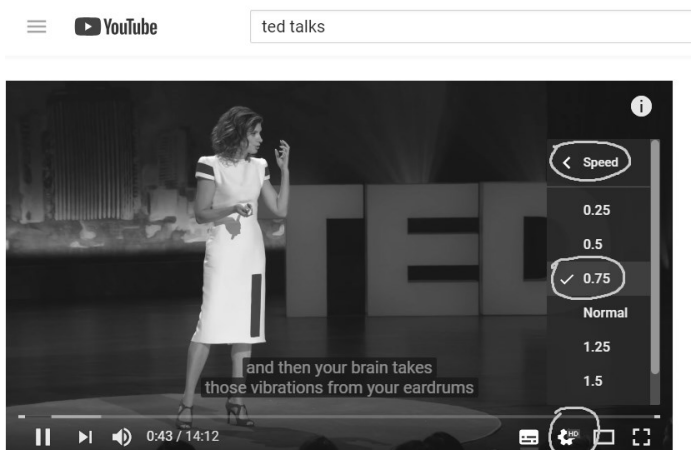
If you've used TED Talks you might already be aware that there are thousands of powerful, inspirational presentations. You may also be aware of how easily you can actually select videos based on topic and duration — both important factors in lesson planning. I generally like to use shorter videos of up to 6 minutes but I do make plenty of exceptions to this rule as you can try to select specific parts of longer videos.

Subtitles are useful to help your learners follow better if there is a lot of language to unpack, while the interactive transcripts control the videos directly so it's easier to focus on pronunciation. The interactive transcript can easily be copied onto a Word document to use in a variety of ways: true or false statement quizzes; multiple choice questions; listening gaps fills; dictogloss activities; and using the text for specific language and structures. You can also use them for webquests for further reading/writing.

A very recent, and welcome, addition to the site is the option to play videos at a slightly slower speed. This has been possible on YouTube for some time. I recommend only going down to 0.75 if you use this option, otherwise the speakers will sound a bit drunk!

If you create a *free* account on the site, you can also save and download videos. The screenshot here

shows both of these features. You can also see 2 videos about the same topic: Happiness. The twist is that these two videos address the same topic in two very different ways. This can easily be used as jigsaw reading/listening by doing any of



How language shapes the way we think | Lera Boroditsky

*Adjusting the speed on a Youtube video, very similar to the TED site.*

the following:

- Different groups watch either of the two videos before the lesson (or parts of the videos at the start of the lesson) on their own devices. During the lesson, they are given tasks based on their own video. They then need to pair up with a partner from the other team and explain what they understood. This will hopefully lead to an interesting discussion on which speaker they agree with most.
- Choose contrasting phrases from each video and ask pairs to identify who said which phrase. A twist to this might be to intentionally copy the sentences and insert errors for the groups to identify and correct.
- Class/group debates with each side arguing for either of the two speakers from the videos, with a follow-up writing task about the topic to serve as consolidation. Debates are excellent when guidance and time is given to preparation of arguments presented.

TED also provides hundreds of playlists to get inspiration from: <https://www.ted.com/playlists>. I particularly like the “Success” playlist within the Business section for Business English classes.

### Music Videos — for the visual imagery

If we focus on the visual side of music videos — rather than relying on the song lyrics,— there are quite a few videos to use, especially when the visuals add significant layers of meaning to the message conveyed through the song lyrics (or an entirely different message!). A stark example of this is the latest single (at the time of writing this piece) by *Childish Gambino*,

“*This is America*”. It is a visual masterpiece full of obvious and not-so-obvious cultural references about race issues and gun use in the US. Of course, this video can only be used with an adult/mature audience as it has very strong images. Still, there are plenty of sources to help the discussion flow in higher level classes. Check this digest of articles about the controversial video here: <https://nyti.ms/2wmGNCf> to get you inspired.

A song from an obscure band your students will not have heard about: *Frightened Rabbit's 'The Woodpile'* <https://bit.ly/2siVWzT>. The video takes place at a ‘crime scene’ in a downtown convenience shop. It seems to all have been shot in one long take and is full of many characters and a lot of things happening at the same time but in slow-motion. This is great because it can be used for a running commentary task done in pairs.

You can ask learners to describe the event from the perspective of the different characters using narrative tenses: e.g. the shop keeper, the ‘victim’, the police officer, the customers, and the TV reporter. Always remember to use plenty of screenshots for such tasks to set visual timelines and help your learners (press CTRL + PRT SC on your keyboard and then CTRL+V to paste onto a Word document and resize to fit). You can ask specific questions as to what each character was seen doing/wearing/feeling and what they might have done before or after the timeline of the video.



If you stop the video at around 3.02 minutes you will get the image above, which leads nicely to a “What happens next?” and a surprise ending to the video. This video lesson can be closed off by discussing the effect of news media and fake news.

You can use *Radiohead's* cryptic video for ‘*Just*’ in a similar way to speculate on the reason why the man

refused to get up after falling over in the street. I recently saw a good lesson based on this video which focused on modals and speculation e.g. must/might + have structures.

Other music videos I have used that are rich on storytelling are, in no particular order:

- ‘Stan’ by Eminem (featuring Dido) (<https://bit.ly/1q90nGG>) can be used to talk about dysfunctional relationships, obsession and abuse.
- ‘Bad Day’ by Daniel Powter (<https://bit.ly/1eY2K9L>) can be used to discuss routines and common annoyances and loneliness.
- ‘Bittersweet symphony’ by The Verve, ‘Streets of Philadelphia’ by Bruce Springsteen, and Kylie Minogue’s ‘Come Into My World’ all belong to the genre of video where the artist is seen walking down the street and coming across different people and situations. These videos can be used for pair work with learners watching different parts of the videos to try to spot specific elements e.g. specific objects or people as they appear, location and actions seen. This can be done as open questions or true or false quizzes in a lively competitive way.

### Commercials

Commercials are short and often rich in content. They are perfect for lower level learners. For example, this Ikea Commercial (<https://bit.ly/2shT8Df>) shows two people (sort of!) dancing and interacting with objects around the living room.

Since it is an IKEA advert, there is an obvious emphasis on the objects around the room. I took the two screenshots below from the beginning and end of this short video. These two images can be used for a Spot the Differences pair work activity. Alternatively, you could also present the screenshots

before or even without the video) and get them to describe their images to their partner to then discuss which layout they liked best. Both kinds of tasks will require usage/revision of several household items as well as “There is/are” + Present Continuous structures and prepositions of place.

For more ideas on how to upgrade your video lessons, please check out the following websites:

- <http://eflclassroom.com/videolessons/>
- <http://lessonstream.org/materials/video-lesson-plans/>
- <http://film-english.com/>

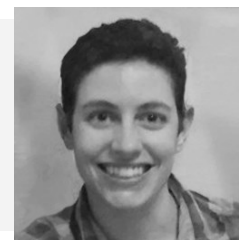
Would you like to suggest topics for future instalments for this feature? Please get in touch on [nfabri@gmail.com](mailto:nfabri@gmail.com).

**Natasha Fabri**



## Lesson share: Word dominoes

Adrian Theuma shows us a step-by-step lesson using Word Dominoes.



Word Dominoes is a picture-based alternative to the regular dominoes board game. It is easily found on online retail websites.

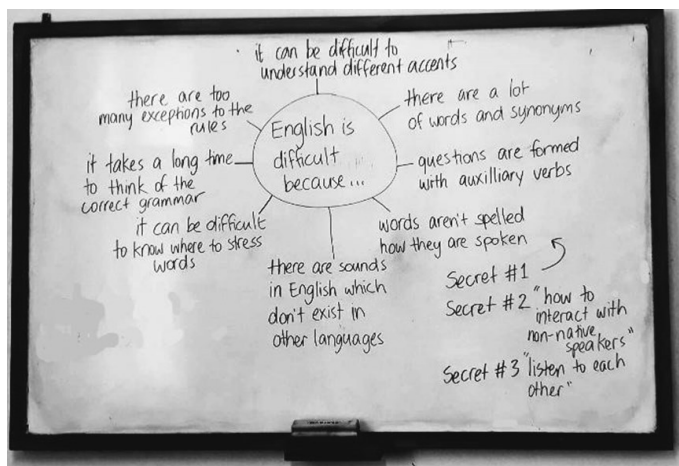
For this lesson, the recommended levels are B2-C1 and the lesson works best with a minimum of 6 students.

### Session 1

**MATERIALS** – youtube.com, “TEDxOakville – Judy Thompson – Three Secrets You Need To Know About The English Language” on: <https://bit.ly/1eW92sk>

### Warmer

Pair work: students briefly talk to a partner about areas of English they personally find difficult when studying. When collecting feedback, board students’ ideas in a mind-map.



### Task 2 – Listening for gist and detail

Group work: students are divided into two groups and are placed as far away from each other as premises allow. Each group is assigned a Secret, i.e. group A watch Secret #1 [01:30 – 04:04]\* and group B watch Secret #2 [04:05 – 08:00]

The students can use mobile phones, laptops or tablets to watch the video and are told that they can watch the clip as many times as they feel necessary to gather enough information to present their Secret to the other group.

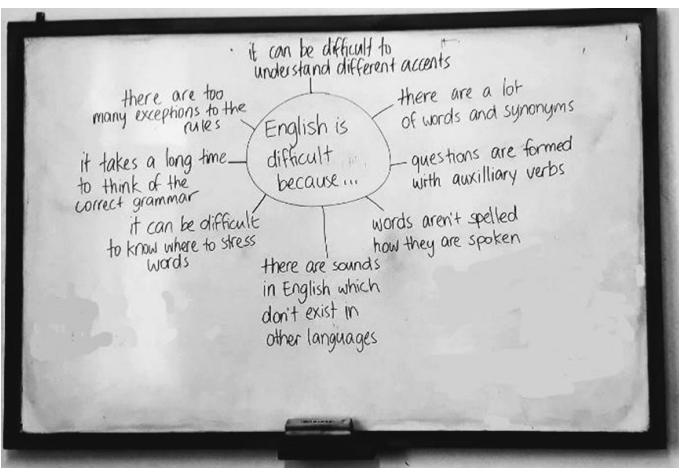
Pair work: students are brought back together in pairs combining groups A and B (if there are an odd number of students, make one team of 3 e.g. A, A, B) and are told to explain what they watched to their partner.

Feedback: teacher monitors the group work and makes sure that there are no critical misunderstandings and answers any vocabulary questions that may arise.

### TASK 3 – Checking for listening and gist

Play the whole video.

Comprehension question: What is the third and last Secret? (Answer: That English is an idiomatic language.)



### Task 1 – Introduction

Play the first part of the video [00:00 – 01:30]\*

Comprehension question: Who are the “Three Secrets Of English” aimed at? (Answer. The first secret is aimed at ESL students, the second secret is aimed at native language speakers and the third secret is aimed at anyone who speaks English.)

Predictive question: What do you think the three Secrets are?

## Session 2

MATERIALS – same Youtube video as session 1/ Word Dominoes picture cards or tiles.

### Task 1 Listening for detail

Play Secret #3 again [08:02 – 15:03]

#### Comprehension questions:

1. According to the speaker, what does the word “collocation” mean?

(Answer: Expressions; small groups of words which come together to create a mental image.)

2. What are three examples she gives of collocations?

(Answer: Fall in love, carved in stone, have dinner, merry Christmas...)

3. What is a scenario she describes where people say one thing when they mean something else?

(Answer: When her son asks “are you going to finish that?” when he wants to eat her unfinished potato or “what are you doing tonight?” when he wants to borrow her car.)

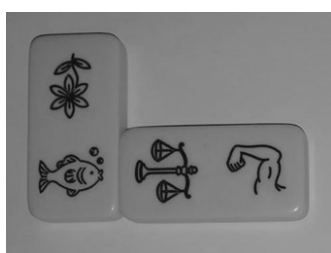


2. Using two of the words as part of an idiom or expression

### TASK 2 – Word Dominoes / Recognising and using collocations

Pre-teaching: give the students some examples of the different ways the dominoes can be combined as follows:

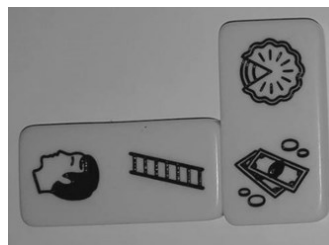
1. Combining two words to make one word or phrase



*fish scales*



*peace treaty*



*to climb the ladder of success*



*to get cold feet*

3. Using homonyms to create compound nouns or phrases



*see (sea)-saw*

Preparation: lay out all cards/tiles face-up on a table and shuffle. Place four random tiles in the form of a cross (+) in the middle of the table, so that only the outward-facing pictures are accessible.



Pair work: students take turns, in pairs, to place tiles in line with or adjacent to the existing tiles to create collocations as described above, in 01:30 minutes or less. If the phrase is accepted by the whole group, that team earn one point. If the team's time runs out, their turn runs out and they receive no points. This continues clockwise until all tiles are placed and the pair who scored highest wins.

Feedback: the teacher monitors which phrases are being created and gives advice and correction accordingly.

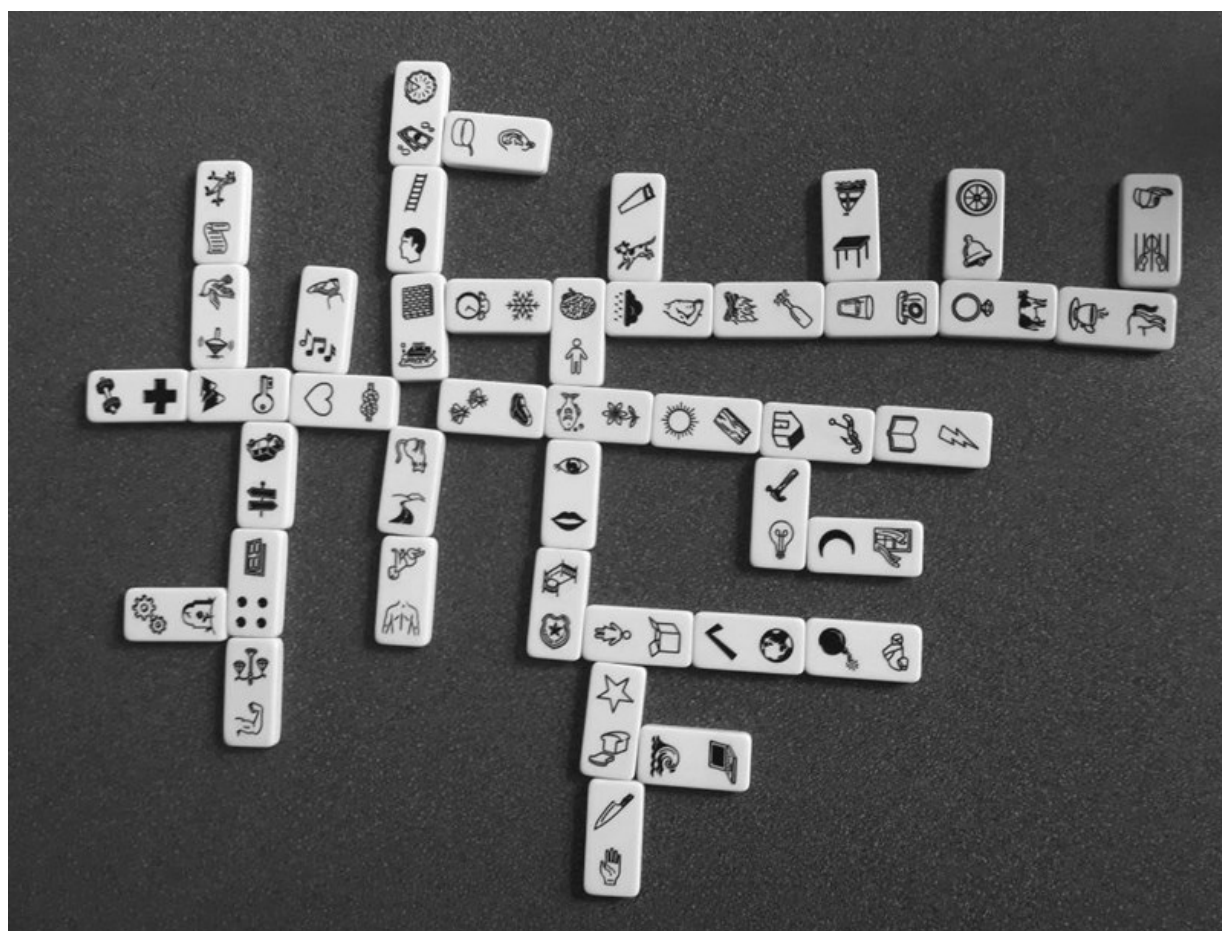
Finishing early: if the game ends before the end of the lesson, repeat the above, instructing the students that they should try not to use any of the previous phrases. Other variations include switching partners (in which the winners of the previous round can pick their new partner first) and lowering the time limit from 01:30 to 01:00 minute.

### Task 3 – Homework

Writing: list 3 “Secrets” of learning English from your perspective and give tips on how other students can improve in these areas.

Editors’ note: For the full lesson, plus transcripts go to the Public MATEFL Drive folder: <https://bit.ly/2xmXk9w>

**Adrian Theuma**





# Being a (Non-)Native ELT teacher

By Christian Keszthelyi



While it still is a badge of honour for language schools if a very high percentage of their teacher pool comprises of native speakers, being a native or a non-native teacher of EFL both have their own advantages and disadvantages. What are the downsides and benefits of being a native or a non-native speaker teacher? Well, as with most things, the answer is not black or white.

When somebody starts learning a language, their first point of reference is the way their teacher speaks the language. In the EFL industry, the Queen's English, or as it is sometimes known, 'received pronunciation', has often been regarded as the standard model of English to which learners aspire. As such, students often expect language schools to provide native speaker-teachers, preferably speaking British English. This is the reason why there is such high demand for native speakers in the industry. However, while one might speak the most immaculate Queen's English, that does not necessarily make them the best teachers, only very good speakers of the language.

When discussing native and non-native speaker teachers, a distinction must be drawn between acquiring and learning a language. While native speakers can literally take English for granted, as they effortlessly acquired it — let us even dare say received it as a gift — non-native speakers might well have sweat blood through their conscious efforts to learn the language. Therefore, yes, non-natives will most probably never reach the same level of English language production as natives, but they are immensely more aware of the language as a system. While natives deliberately need to work on their knowledge in order to pass a TELT exam, non-natives need less time to prepare, as every time they speak the language, they know why they produce it the way they do. Applying the analogy of Ernest Hemingway's

**When somebody starts learning a language, their first point of reference is the way their teacher speaks the language.**

*Iceberg Story*, while both natives and non-natives can stand on the tip of the iceberg next to each other, natives need to dip into the ice-cold water and investigate the immense underwater part of the berg in order to understand the tip, while non-natives have already been there and done that.

While a native speaks the language "correctly" because it just 'feels right', non-native speakers do so because of the effort they have invested. And this, I believe, is where non-natives have the upper hand. For instance, whenever a student asks for a grammar point to be clarified, I can immediately relate to their struggles, and feel more than capable of helping them because I've been in the exact same position myself. The same cannot always be said of native-speakers, however. Just try asking a native speaker (not a teacher) what the present perfect is!

At the same time, it must not be forgotten that the language learning process for a non-native speaker never stops. As a non-native, one will always meet words, idioms or expressions they have never heard of and may need to check, while natives obviously have less trouble in this regard. Natives effortlessly understand the vast majority of their language (including idiomatic expressions), and are equally capable of producing this language themselves in their own teacher talk. The fact that native speakers are so easily able to understand and call upon a wider range of language is likely to give them a greater sense of confidence, which is certainly an advantage that not all non-natives can boast.

English has become the universal language of international communication, and as such, every speaker, whether native or non-native, must be proud of the way they use English. The English language has jumped off the pages of books and started its own life in the mouths of our truly multicultural world. There-

fore, teachers should speak their own English with pride, but must never stop trying to improve it, and must encourage their students to do the same. This way, together, we can nurture a truly colourful world, where people are conscious of the differences, dare to embrace the variety, and never cease to keep learning every day. Since the classroom is a great place for learning to start, our role as educators is more crucial than ever.

References:

**While in womb, babies begin learning language from their mothers** <https://bit.ly/2IT3Udv>

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**How Many People Speak English, And Where Is It Spoken?** <https://bit.ly/2oNyITj>

Crystal, David (2006). "Chapter 9: **English worldwide**". In Denison, David; Hogg, Richard M. A History of the English language. Cambridge University Press. pp. 420–439. ISBN 978-0-511-16893-2.

Crystal, David (2003). **English as a Global Language** (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press. p. 69. ISBN 978-0-521-53032-3.

**Christian Keszthelyi**

*Editors' note: If you are interested in this topic, you can visit the TEFL Equity Advocates and Academy, an organisation which advocates against Native speaker bias in ELT: <http://teflequityadvocates.com>*

# Word Search

Find 15 of the most common words in teaching terminology in the grid below. Words in this puzzle can appear horizontal, vertical, diagonal as well as backwards!

T H R T U Z A U S N V S I K U N E G O R J L J C T  
 U R L Z Y W K W K G N D E A C O U L A L F K K S I  
 J Q A B R S W X P O V D J R O I J R I Z F V B C P  
 E U X N I N I W I V Z O T S C T A A F C W G O D V  
 F R T N S A X T G S L W U A F A T B Y K I R N X X  
 I N S L Y L C E X P L A N A T I O N K J R T V Z B  
 G S X M O U A J W U V K X P M C T E O E D H Q M U  
 K D M L R M U T H C H C M U O N X Q C J U I J K F  
 E S L T S D S R I H Z A H V S U W T L C T I Q F U  
 D T S F M R O F T O N B C W M N I S E L P M A X E  
 P N A F S T O X E C N D A D T O A W X O F U E F H  
 I V K N I T H A B I N E S X N R H C A H Q X D J O  
 M E A N I N G A O K A E C V V P O L L H G H F I S  
 V E O V Z M Q G A N H F W J A T Z U P N I B E B F  
 T M F W F T O K R B R S B R I T F U O J N J M U W  
 V P D Y H J M N D B V M N J A V W F E W H Q V V J  
 W D D D T Y J R S K G N W L X H R C Y Y X Z Q D T  
 G P I G W W K M Y K R K I C R J H Z Q I R T W J M  
 N A P B O C H J O G H C N I U O M N G K V A K Y H  
 Q Y W L R I A A E R Y T V K L S O X T I B U E X Z  
 I E Q E X E O U F A W P A I E G Q D G V F Y O U U  
 W X W S D G O O Z T B F Y S S B V I V A M G T N O  
 N U D T B A F G K M G B T T D P Q P B S T C J T D  
 W S X D P R Z N U F E U U W F T C X V G S O H M E  
 B M B H J U T Q K R G X P H G V M G V Y S Y Y F F

- CORRECTION
- ECHO
- ELICIT
- EXAMPLES
- EXPLANATION
- FEEDBACK
- FORM
- INSTRUCTIONS
- MEANING
- MONITOR
- NOMINATE
- PRONUNCIATION
- RULES
- TRANSLATION
- WHITEBOARD

## Vox Pop: The international teachers

We asked teachers about their experiences teaching in Malta and abroad



**Our vox pop contributors for this issue are:**

### **Michaela Abela**

Michaela has been teaching EFL since she was 18. She started doing it as a summer job whilst studying for her BA (Hons) English and soon realised it was a career she wanted to pursue. She then went on to do her CELTA and M.Phil in Applied Linguistics before moving to Italy to teach.



### **Justyna Rogers**

Justyna is an enthusiastic EFL professional. She holds: BA in Pedagogy, MSc in Tourism, CELTA and DELTA, she's also a teacher-trainer. She's given numerous workshops at MATEFL seminars and the ELT Malta Conferences. Now she is the Founder and Director of Malta English Teachers Agency – META.



### **Alison Navarro**

Alison went to Madrid in 2004 because she wanted to experience learning a new language from zero for myself. She is still there, and is still learning. 4 years ago, she started her own language training company.



### **1. How long have you worked in ELT/which countries have you worked in?**

#### **Michaela Abela**

I have been working in ELT for the last 8 years. I started working in Malta, first during the summer months and then full time. I then worked in Dublin as a cover teacher for a couple of months during my studies. In 2017, I moved to Italy and am currently completing my second scholastic year with a private English language school in Civitavecchia, near Rome.

### **Christian Keszthelyi**

Born and raised in Hungary, Chris became obsessed with the English language during his secondary school years. He went on to bag an MA degree in Applied Linguistics. As an advocate of happiness, he is enjoying Malta at the moment.



#### **Petra Squier**

I have been working in ELT since 2008. I did my CELTA in Hanoi, VN (best thing I've ever done!). After Hanoi I went to Costa Rica, then China, The Gambia, Malta, Germany and Malta again.

### **Petra Squier**

Petra is a German national who has lived in an English speaking environment for over 45 years. She got bored with her job and teaching English sounded like a great idea, so she decided to get her CELTA. Petra loves travelling and meeting new people and teaching English allows her just that!



### **Christian Keszthelyi**

On and off I have worked as an EFL teacher for almost a decade now. I started very early, during my university studies as a private tutor for elementary and secondary school students and later on I worked at a tiny private language school in the suburbs of the Hungarian capital Budapest. Before relocating to Malta, I spent a wonderful year at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts in Budapest as an EFL lecturer.

## 2. What are the required qualifications to be able to teach in the country (other than Malta) that you worked in?

### Christian Keszthelyi

As far as I know, a BA/BS is typically required in addition to a TEFL TESOL Certification, which can be obtained by taking international TEFL courses, but I'm not entirely sure about that.

### Michaela Abela

All schools have asked for a CELTA and many seem to prefer that you have a first degree too.

### Petra Squier

Actually, the same as Malta, all countries require a CELTA or TESOL Certificate.

### Alison Navarro

There are not enough teachers to keep up with the demand here in Spain. Private language academies are unregulated. Ideal candidates typically have a degree, a TEFL course and at least a year's experience teaching English.

### Justyna Rogers

This is a difficult question and it really depends on the country and the school. In Poland for example, you need a BA in English or CELTA, in Hungary and the UK a TEFL certificate obtained from a reputable school is enough, but some schools specify that the TEFL course should be XYZ hours long. However, if you are a non-native English speaker it is always best if you can impress them with CELTA!

## 3. What is it like to work in this country?

### Michaela Abela

I have really enjoyed working in Italy and feel I have been given the opportunity to grow as a teacher. I have taught general English classes to students of all ages and levels as well as prepared classes for Cambridge exams. I have also had the opportunity to teach military personnel and Geography CLIL classes to primary school groups. Students' ages ranged

from 4 years old to adults. Evidently, as a teacher here in Italy you are expected to teach a range of classes and levels and this makes the job more exciting and interesting.

The average number of contact hours per week is 25. However, during peak months this can reach 30. I work during all hours of the day, sometimes starting classes at 8 am and finishing at 9 pm. Pay varies from school to school and cost of living varies according to the city.

**The very best thing about teaching is that you get to visit many countries and I love travelling. I guess that's why I took the CELTA course.**

### Petra Squier

The best thing about teaching in Malta is that students come from all over the world. In the other countries it was mainly students from that particular country. It is much more interesting to have multinational students in a classroom.

I have learned a lot from students and about their countries. The classes in the other countries were mainly made up of native students. Working hours in Vietnam were the most irregular. One could start work at 0730 in the morning, have a break and work again from 1730 until 2200 hrs. including Saturdays.

Costa Rica also had lessons on Saturday as most of the students were working during the week. A normal workload was around 23 to 25 hours per week. In relation to the cost of living, Vietnam had the best pay and teachers had one year contracts which included bonuses if one stayed on after a year and a lot of teachers did, therefore the turnover was quite low. The same could be said for Costa Rica.

The very best thing about teaching is that you get to visit many countries and I love travelling. I guess that's why I took the CELTA course.

### Justyna Rogers

To be completely honest, my experience of working in Poland is a bit out-dated as I worked there more than 10 years ago and I know things have changed, and I mean changed A LOT! For example, all my colleagues who worked in Poland in recent years were very happy and impressed with the standards. Teachers always praise Polish students to be very creative, outgoing, full-of-ideas and not shy to speak. Students of all ages are also extremely moti-

vated and just love learning (for many younger students, English is the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> language they are learning/perfecting).

In Hungary, I know that the rates are still a bit low; most schools would employ you only in the afternoons/evenings. But if you manage to find a job teaching in-company Business English, you will be fine.

The UK, for starters, offers really good salaries. EFL schools are similar to the ones in Malta, and the students who travelled to Malta to improve their English, very often continue their education in the UK, so you might see some familiar faces there.

### Alison Navarro

I love the fact that you can work with students in the long term. I have students who I have been working with for almost 10 years. In turn, this has helped me evolve and take on different roles, teacher, trainer and language coach. As the student's skills improve, doors start to open and their needs in class change. At Mucho Ingles, the company I started 4 years ago, we teach business English so we teach adults, but most Spanish people have taken classes at some point so there are students of all ages.

Our students are typically with us from September to July. They usually have an hour of class a week, two hours a week if they are lucky. When classes are provided by their company, they may take classes for several years. Apart from weekly classes, you can opt to teach intensive courses, specialized training e.g. for interviews or presentations and immersion programs are very popular here as well. I worked for a company that organised week-long immersion programs and weekend ones which are also a lot of fun for teachers and students.

Workload varies but there is A LOT of work. We started working online a couple of years ago and virtual classes by video conference have really taken off now. It is very practical for students who are field based and need a flexible schedule and great for the teacher as virtual classes have 0 travel time as you work from home.

Travel time, this was the toughest part for me. Most language schools have limited office space so

you will be expected to go to the student's office most of the time. Depending on where you live it can take you 45 minutes or even an hour to get there and then you need to make your way back. This is definitely the downside. If your first class is at 8am, then your second block would be at lunch time (1pm – 3pm) and your third block after 5pm, going back and forth can be exhausting. Most of the classes are out of office hours. You can get what we call 'block hours' but these are not that easy to come across.

Pay range depends on the region you choose to live in, your experience and of course the amount of hours you decide to work. You can make a decent living teaching English in Spain!

### 4. Did you have a PLN (Professional Learning Network) / Were there any teaching associations that you formed part of?

#### Christian Keszthelyi

There must be, but I did not take teaching very seriously back in Hungary. Actually, I half-abandoned it and pursued journalism for a while. But then I relocated to Malta, gained an extra boost, got into the awesome EFL environment here and started heavily working on my professional skills. My love for teaching has been reignited by Mary Abela and Kevin Spiteri, and I would like to thank them for all the inspiration and knowledge they gave me.

**I love the fact that you can work with students in the long term. I have students who I have been working with for almost 10 years.**

#### Alison Navarro

Teaching English can be a solitary job but it does not have to be! There are a number of teaching associations that organise events and training seminars regularly. I try to attend whenever I can. I also participate in online forums for teachers in both Madrid and Barcelona.

The team of teachers I work with are great and we meet up regularly, we also use an online platform to share lessons, material anything we can really. I believe it's important to feel like you belong to a team, it's easy to get cut off from your colleagues if you never actually run into them so we work hard to keep in touch.

# The ELT Industry in Malta in a Nutshell

Facts and figures about EFL students coming to Malta in 2017 by Matt Done



Last year, foreign language students attending English language courses at local licensed English language teaching (ELT) schools numbered 87,190, equivalent to an increase of 13.6% over 2016. The majority of English language students attending courses in Malta came from Italy (29.4%), Germany (11.8%), and France (10.5%). Together, these accounted for half the total number of students (Table 1 below).

Citizenship	Male	Female	Total	Male	Females	Total
	2016			2017		
Italy	7,931	10,867	18,798	11,209	14,385	25,594
Germany	4,517	6,400	10,917	4,275	6,002	10,277
France	3,426	5,091	8,517	3,572	5,566	9,138
Russia	1,431	2,725	4,156	1,876	2,942	4,818
Brazil	881	1,740	2,621	1,594	2,925	4,519
Poland	1,034	2,097	3,131	1,513	2,999	4,512
Spain	1,383	2,594	3,977	1,380	2,231	3,611
Austria	1,569	1,965	3,534	1,436	1,671	3,107
Japan	584	1,810	2,394	744	2,180	2,924
Switzerland	819	1,146	1,965	995	1,387	2,382
Turkey	1,625	1,127	2,752	1,363	966	2,329
Czech Republic	502	895	1,397	518	957	1,475
Colombia	439	654	1,093	523	765	1,288
Netherlands	305	831	1,136	357	822	1,179
South Korea	255	571	826	305	726	1,031
Ukraine	277	379	656	326	456	782
Belgium	240	503	743	267	474	741
Slovakia	222	396	618	251	413	664
Sweden	427	874	1,301	116	514	630
Other countries <sup>1</sup>	2,499	3,699	6,198	2,492	3,697	6,189
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,366</b>	<b>46,364</b>	<b>76,730</b>	<b>35,112</b>	<b>52,078</b>	<b>87,190</b>

\* includes only students arriving in 2016 and 2017  
 Note: <sup>1</sup> includes students whose citizenship is unknown

The largest share of language students was aged 15 years or less, making up 32.2% of total students. Students aged 50 or over were in the minority, and numbered 5,741. Female students outnumbered males in all categories, and accounted for 59.7% of the entire student population (Table 2 below).

Age group	Citizenship					
	Italy	Germany	France	Russia	Brazil	Poland
15 and under	10,391	3,144	4,058	2,032	88	1,809
16-17	8,046	1,598	2,039	515	108	499
18-25	3,048	1,447	1,834	685	1,456	235
26-35	1,352	1,024	440	839	1,810	426
36-49	1,602	1,616	429	566	639	1,088
50 and over	1,142	1,446	336	178	418	442
Unspecified	13	2	2	3	-	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,594</b>	<b>10,277</b>	<b>9,138</b>	<b>4,818</b>	<b>4,519</b>	<b>4,512</b>

\* includes only students arriving in 2017

## MATEFL events in pictures

Some images from the Winter sessions in November.



Pam Borg's session 'Taking back Control of Technology'



Karin Grech during her session on art in the EFL classroom



Alan Marsh during his session 'Ways with Words'



Justyna Rogers talking about project-based learning (PBL)



Fun with virtual reality in Kevin Spiteri's session



Jean Theuma talks about ESP (English for specific purposes)

## MATEFL events in pictures

Images from the AGM in March and Antonia Clare's plenaries in May.



The MATEFL AGM at Easy School of Languages (left)-,.

MATEFL's guest speaker Antonia Clare at the start of her talk 'Language, Learning, and the Creative Mind.' (below)



Participants engaged during Antonia Clare's sessions (above and right).

Post-session lunch (below).



All photos by Natasha Fabri.