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Welcome to our regular newsletter exploring the world of ICT in education, online training and development. In this issue (October 2007) and the next two issues (November and December 2007) we offer you **A potted history of technology in teaching – past, present and future**. We hope this will give you an idea of how we got from paper to pixel over the past decade or so, of what kinds of technologies are being used, and how – and we aim to make some predictions as to what might be waiting around the online corner for us.

You'll find the following sections in this newsletter:

- **A POTTED HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING – PAST**
- **CONFERENCES**
- **COMPANY NEWS & UPDATE**
- **UPCOMING AND NEW ONLINE COURSES**

## **STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!**

Our new online **Teaching Business English** course starts soon! Consisting of 30 hours over 4 weeks (**20 November – 20 December**), the course looks at a range of useful techniques, tools and resources for teaching Business English to learners. We consider a variety of contexts for Business English teaching, and cover issues of course and materials design, needs analysis, and performance-driven learning based on the workplace. This course also offers an **optional add-on week** (7-8 hours) on how to use the virtual world **Second Life** in teaching and training Business English learners.

Full details and enrolment at <http://www.theconsultants-e.com/courses/be/>

### **Education@EduNation seminars!**

We are offering a series of **free seminars and workshops** to be held every month on one of our virtual training islands in Second Life - EduNation III. Speakers include Jeremy Harmer, Gavin Dudeney, Graham Stanley and a host of others. Some sessions will concentrate on teaching, and others on teaching in SL – and will be in a variety of formats: seminars, workshops and - logistics permitting - a pecha kucha session ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pecha\\_Kucha](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pecha_Kucha)). For more information, contact Gavin ([gavin.dudeney@theconsultants-e.com](mailto:gavin.dudeney@theconsultants-e.com)) or visit EduNation III in Second Life and use the automatic sign-up boards (<http://tinyurl.com/3awkys>) .

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## **A POTTED HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING – PAST**

### **Introduction**

Before the computing era (or at least before computers became readily available and affordable), technology in teaching typically encompassed the use of television and video resources, language laboratories, cassettes and – perhaps – an overhead projector. It might also have included the use of a photocopier. To an extent (and with the possible exception of the language laboratory) these technologies are still in the teacher's armoury and used on an everyday basis. Indeed, in many schools and teaching centres these tools still make up the greater part of those tools regularly used for both preparation and teaching, but the quiet revolution of technology has slowly transformed aspects of many teachers' lives and many of

our colleagues around the world are more likely these days to be found blogging and updating their wikis than they are cutting pictures out of magazines and sticking them on sheets of paper, or creating a new podcast for their learners than lining up the next listening exercise on the cassette or CD.

## The Past

In the beginning there was the Word, and the Word was good (to coin a phrase) – or at least we believed it to be good. When computers first became financially viable for teachers on a personal level in the mid-eighties they were little more than glorified typing machines. Limited to displays of sixteen colours, the sound produced little more than electronic 'beeps' and we stored our work on hard drives of 20MB which today would be hard-pressed to accommodate even the most basic of programs. This was an era in which few saw a great future for personal computing, and Bill Gates was (erroneously) often quoted as considering that *"640kb of RAM ought to be enough for anyone"*.

CALL activities of the day were typically StoryBoard, programming in BASIC, text reconstruction software, etc. Essentially then, the first introduction of computers in teaching involved solitary work on behalf of the teacher – preparing worksheets or basic electronic exercises for their learners to use, often on a woefully under-powered machine.

This state of affairs continued into the early nineties and around this time schools and language centres began to invest in computer labs and – predominately - CDROM-based multimedia materials, particularly from the coursebook publishers, with it becoming almost de rigeur to attach some kind of electronic media to every publication.

By the mid-nineties computer facilities were often largely devoid of learners and severely under-used, and the notion of CALL often discredited in the minds of many teachers. There are a variety of reasons for this: lack of training, paucity of good materials, the usual pressures on teachers' time, and what often seemed like an in-built aversion to technology use. Yet a resurgence was just around the corner as we headed towards the wired age.

It is arguably the case that technology in language teaching really came of age when the hardware caught up with our expectations, and when the Internet first appeared, encouraging – as its basic premise – both knowledge sharing and communication - two things it shared with language learning. Perhaps more importantly it opened up the possibility of widening our horizons beyond our own teaching context and our own countries.

And interested teachers around the world somehow began to find each other and to get together to explore this new and exciting medium together. A lot of the early experiments involved the use of email and chat as the primary media, largely due to the fact that they weren't bandwidth hungry and could be used on slower connections.

Early projects included email penpal exchanges between learners in different countries, and regular chat sessions between different countries and cultures. Early users of these technologies were quick to realise the potential for widening the teaching space and bringing the real world into their classrooms.

In these days of Web 1.0 few educators had the vision, resources or tools to look beyond using the Internet as a source of information. These were primarily the days of static pages and we were, predominately, consumers of the information they contained.

Teachers also experimented with an early form of blended learning, recommending banks of exercises online that learners could use outside class times. Although the majority of these sites provided mechanical exercises, they proved popular with learners who wanted extra practice or were weaker at some aspects of the language. These days one can find many hundreds of such sites, both free and paying.

And yet it was still obvious, even after six or seven years of the Net being available that whilst half of the world was using it in their everyday lives, it still hadn't been taken up in the classroom. Our mistake in those days was, perhaps, to consider technology to be something special. This can, to a certain extent, be explained by the novelty factor of it all. With more and more teachers discovering the Net every day, it was still very much a new resource – and new resources, as we know, take some time to become normalised. In essence, we were making too much of it, turning the use of the Net in our teaching into some kind of special event.

Infrastructure was partially to blame – if one has to take learners from one space (the classroom) to another (the computer room) then this breaks up the class and contributes, at least partially, to the isolation of technology. It remains 'outside' the classroom.

In the past few years, steps have been taken to remedy this by avoiding the construction of computer labs, and putting one or two connected computers in each class, often with a data projector in order to exploit the resource on a whole class level. In the last couple of years electronic whiteboards may have replaced this set up in those centres with the economic resources to fit them – and IWBs may well be the first example of technology being 'normalised'.

**Note:** In the next two issues of our Newsletter (November and December 2007) we continue to offer you **A potted history of technology in teaching** – and will take a look at the **present** and the **future**.

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## CONFERENCES

You'll find members of **The Consultants-E** speaking at the following upcoming conferences, and giving the following workshops:

- **Education@EduNation, Second Life**  
November 2007 – June 2008  
A series of free monthly seminars and workshops on teaching and training (both in Second Life and outside), held on EduNation III in Second Life.  
<http://edunation.theconsultants-e.com>
- **British Council Saudi Arabia ELT Conference, Riyadh**  
October 30 – November 1, 2007  
<http://www.britishcouncil.org/me-saudi-arabia-news-events-link.htm>
- **Cross-regional EL Teachers Association International Conference, Omsk, Russia**  
November 6 -7
- **QuiTE Conference, London**  
November 9  
[http://www.quality-tesol-ed.org.uk/2007\\_seminar.html](http://www.quality-tesol-ed.org.uk/2007_seminar.html)
- **British Council & IATEFL Learning Technologies SIG, Milan**  
November 26 – 26, 2007  
<http://www.britishcouncil.org/me-saudi-arabia-news-events-link.htm>

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## COMPANY NEWS & UPDATE

- **New Courses**
- **Second Life Projects**
- **EduCation@EduNation**
- **British Council Primary ICT Project**
- **TCE Scholarships**

### New Courses

As well as the recent additions of our short (two-week courses) on podcasting, wikis and Second Life we have added a couple of innovations to the main suite of courses for this autumn:

#### 1) Moodle

To complement our basic Moodle training course for teachers (Moodle Starter) we have added a more advanced course which delves deeper into Moodle, and looks at the more complex teaching tools Moodle has to offer. This new course (Moodle Smarter) is ideal for those people who have already taken the Starter course, or for those with some experience of Moodle or other VLEs.

#### 2) Teaching Business English

The Teaching Business English course is aimed at teachers who are new to Business English

(BE) teaching, and at those with experience. The course looks at a range of useful techniques, tools and resources for teaching BE to learners and considers a variety of contexts for BE teaching, covering issues of course and materials design, needs analysis, and performance-driven learning based on the workplace. It also looks at how to teach business skills such as presenting, negotiating, as well as written and spoken business communication skills, and intercultural competence and considers how new technologies may be integrated into BE teaching. Participants also have the opportunity to brush up on their subject knowledge of key business concepts in areas such as marketing, leadership skills and management.

This course additionally offers an **optional add-on week** (7-8 hours) on how to use the virtual world **Second Life** in teaching and training BE learners. More Information here: <http://www.theconsultants-e.com/courses/be/index.asp>

## Second Life Projects

In the past month we have added our third island to our presence in Second Life, thus completing phase three of a four-island development plan. We now have three very distinct environments in SL, all connected together to form a pleasant, productive tropical haven for educators and trainers:

EduNation – the original island is now purely devoted to educators who wish to design and build their own environment. With structures from space-age glass through to tree house, the island is inhabited by an interesting collection of teachers and trainers, from Scottish Grammar Schools, through social projects such as E-Learning for Africa to the teacher training department of the University of Vienna.

EduNation II continues to be the epicentre of the teaching activity in the EduNation Archipelago, with the entire island being available free of charge to interested educators. With a wide variety of teaching environments and tools (podcasts, RSS, vlogs, video materials, presentation tools, etc.) it is an ideal, comfortable environment in which to get to grips with Second Life.

EduNation III is a zoned and pre-built space with rental properties for educators. Again, it follows the same lines as EduNation II in terms of design, and has a central conference and events centre as well as a large convention space which can accommodate up to 100 participants. EduNation III aims to welcome the wider professional education community by offering full training and support, as well as a polished, corporate environment in which both managers and teachers will feel comfortable. This is where the EduCation@EduNation events will be held (**see below**).

We have also just finished off a complete island build for the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (<http://www.nait.ca>). This project, carried out over a number of weeks during the summer, involved transforming the island from a bare patch of green land to a variety of spaces which could be used by NAIT faculty and their learners. We are pleased to see that the island is now open and that courses have started this Autumn term. More information here: <http://www.digitalalberta.com/nait-enters-the-world-of-second-life>

## Education@EduNation

**These free seminars and workshops** are to be held every month on one of our virtual training islands in Second Life - EduNation III. The seminars will kick off on **Saturday 1st December** with **Gavin Dudeney** showing a number of Second Life tools for educators, and our December speaker will be **Jeremy Harmer**. For more information, contact Gavin ([gavin.dudeney@theconsultants-e.com](mailto:gavin.dudeney@theconsultants-e.com)) or visit EduNation III in Second Life and use the automatic sign-up boards (<http://tinyurl.com/3awkys>). Note that the sessions are restricted to 100 participants, so sign up early to ensure a place!

## British Council 'Primary ICT' Project

We are delighted to have been chosen as international consultants managing a new British Council-funded project which explores the use of ICT in primary education in three countries: Malaysia, Korea and Japan. This project forms part of the larger Primary Innovations project, which aims to facilitate change agendas in primary English language teaching in each of the nine participating countries in the British Council East Asia region (Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Taiwan, Korea, Singapore, Japan and Malaysia).

## TCE Scholarships

Our latest scholarship winner is Duc Dao, from Vietnam. Duc has been awarded a fully funded scholarship on our 50-hour 8-week online course 'ICT in the Classroom', which is quality assured by Trinity College London. A full-time lecturer of English at HCMC Banking University in Vietnam, Duc works with teachers in Vietnam via the ELTECs scheme, and she hopes she will be able to share some of her learning from the course with other teachers in her context by organising workshops and seminars, after the course. We are very much looking forward to working with her during the coming months, and hope she will find the course useful to her own professional development and that of the profession in Vietnam.

We will be offering another scholarship for our 2008 ICT in the Classroom course - please keep an eye on the **Scholarships** page on our website if you would like to apply:

<http://www.theconsultants-e.com/courses/scholarships.asp>

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## OUR NEXT ONLINE COURSES

### Teaching Business English: 20 November - 20 December 2007

#### **30 hours over four weeks. [optional one-week add-on about Second Life]**

The Teaching Business English course looks at a range of useful techniques, tools and resources for teaching Business English to learners. We consider a variety of contexts for Business English teaching, and cover issues of course and materials design, needs analysis, and performance-driven learning based on the workplace. We also look at how to teach business skills such as presenting, negotiating, as well as written and spoken communication skills, and intercultural competence. Participants also have the opportunity to brush up on their subject knowledge of key business concepts in areas such marketing, leadership skills and management. [\[more...\]](#)

### Short courses: Podcasting, Wikis, Second Life - November & December 2007

#### **10 hours over two weeks (each course).**

Podcasts, wikis, and Second Life are ICT tools which are being used by increasingly numbers of teachers in the classroom – these separate short courses will teach you how to use them with your own learners! Each of these short two weeks courses looks at one ICT tool (podcasts, wikis or Second life) in depth. You will learn not only how the tool works, but how to set up projects with and for your own learners. Each course is hands-on and practical. With plenty of tutor guidance and support, you will learn to set up a project with these free Internet-based tools for your own learners. You will leave each course ready to try out the tool with your own classes. [\[more...\]](#)

### ICT in the Classroom: 9 January – 26 March 2008

#### **50 hours over ten weeks.**

The ICT in the Classroom course looks at a range of useful technology-related skills which are immediately applicable in the classroom. You will learn about various approaches to using technology in the classroom and have the opportunity to put them into practice over the duration of the course itself. Areas covered in the course include: lesson planning for using the Internet, using chat and blogs with learners, and WebQuests. Participants will be required to produce a final ICT-based lesson to use with their own learners. [\[more...\]](#)

**in collaboration with [Trinity College London](#)  
dsfsd**

**WINNER – British Council ELTONs Award 2007**  
sfdsfsd

**E-Moderation: A Training Course For Online Tutors: 1 – 30 March 2008**

**30 hours over four weeks.**

This course is aimed at teachers, trainers, tutors, facilitators, lecturers and mentors from any discipline and any level of education, who are interested in developing the skills necessary to become an effective e-moderator in online courses. [[more...](#)]

**Moodle Starter: learn how to use Moodle: 9 January – 12 March 2008**

**40 hours over eight weeks.**

This course is aimed at teachers, trainers, tutors, facilitators, lecturers and mentors from any discipline and any level of education, who are interested in learning how to set up and use Moodle to offer online courses. The course is run entirely online, in Moodle itself. [[more...](#) ]

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That's it for this edition. We hope you've enjoyed the newsletter and would be happy to hear any comments or feedback from you, or any suggestions for topics you'd like to see in future newsletters.

**October, 2007**  
**The Consultants-E Team**

