



STETS

News

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STETS Event – Digital Literacy & Learner Autonomy

On Saturday July 30th Michael Vallance ran a Digital Literacy Workshop for STETS. Sixteen participants discussed the meaning of digital literacy and how information is generated, communicated, retrieved, organised, evaluated and presented (Towndrow & Vallance, 2004). In his clear and persuasive manner, Michael impressed on the group the need to make informed judgements about content, and suggested how to assemble knowledge, develop research skills and effective communication skills for sharing, cooperation and collaboration. Finally participants designed their own activities to promote digital literacy in the language classroom.

Biography: Michael Vallance has taught EFL/ESL and teacher training courses in Italy, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore. He has a combined Masters in CALL & TESOL and is the co-author of *Using IT in the Language Classroom: a guide for teachers and students in Asia* (published by Longman). His Website is <http://homepage.mac.com/mvallance>

Following Michael's presentation, Phyllis Wachob presented her workshop entitled, *Can Learner Autonomy be Taught?*

She stressed three points to encourage learner autonomy:

- Create a classroom environment
- Promote choice
- Use groups as a transition from whole class to individual

Phyllis then shared some practical and useful activities to use in classrooms.

Biography: Phyllis Wachob has an EdD from Sydney University in TESOL. Before joining Nanyang Business School as an Assistant Professor, Phyllis worked in China, Australia, Taiwan, Japan, and the US teaching English. Her recent research and publications focus on cross-cultural communication in the classroom, preparing students to be autonomous learners, and motivation through materials selection.

Cynthia Macknish

STETS/BESIG Event – Business English in the 21st Century

The STETS Special Projects Committee worked with IATEFL's Business English Special Interest Group (BESIG) to organise a Business English Conference from 16-18 September 2005 at the RELC. This Conference took the place of the STETS Annual Workshop for 2005.

The STETS Special Projects Team comprising originally of Richard Slessor, Phyllis Wachob, Manee Lugg and Judith Lindley explored the possibility of an International Business English Conference with Evan Frenzo the IATEFL BESIG Coordinator in Singapore. All agreed that the conference was a viable and worthwhile project. Although Richard and Phyllis left Singapore in July, the

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Special Projects Committee and BESIG went ahead with the preparations for the conference. The SP Committee was also extremely fortunate to be able to get the kind assistance of Lee Kooi Cheng and Happy Goh from NUS who took on the respective responsibilities of Treasurer and Secretary for this committee.

It was a hectic and fun long weekend at RELC. There were more than 15 talks, commercial presentations and workshops. Participants were also able to visit exhibitions by publishers, take part in a panel discussion and network with Business English professionals from many parts of the world. The invited keynote speakers for the conference were Vicki Hollet, the author of many Business English texts, Mark Powell, who has spoken at numerous ELT conferences around the world and Jannie Tay, the well-known Singapore entrepreneur.

The conference attracted more than 60 participants from Singapore, Malaysia, India, Japan and Germany. Feedback was generally positive and Mark Powell's presentation was especially well received.

Grace Kwan



*Mark Powell and
Vicki Hollet,
keynote speakers at
the conference*



*Jannie Tay, keynote
speaker at the
conference*

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*Manee Lugg and
Tiew Lee Ching at
the conference*

STETS Event - Creative Teaching: What does it look like, sound like and feel like?

15 participants spent their Wednesday evening braving wet weather to be at Singapore Polytechnic, and were not only amply rewarded by the light refreshments that warmed their stomachs but especially by the thought-provoking and entertaining presentation by Mr Dennis Sale on *Creative Teaching: What does it look like, sound like and feel like?*

Dennis Sale offered what seemed to be a simple model for creative teaching - using **Resources Strategically** to get the **Results (R-R-S)** we want in our teaching. Participants were introduced to various types of resources (**SHAPE**), concepts such as 'primacy', 'recency' and 'von Restorff' effects', and offered strategies such as 'reframing' and 'wolf-like' tactics to make their teaching interesting. The challenge as I see it is in putting this model into practice. Teachers should have the desire to teach creatively, be willing to take some risks and just do it!

Participants included members of STETS from the tertiary English teaching fraternity and guests from overseas.

The discussion that followed after the presentation was indicative of the level of interest this session had generated - we didn't break up until just before 8.30pm! May the force of creative teaching permeate into our classrooms!

Puvanambigai Ponnampalam



*Dennis Sale at Singapore
Polytechnic*

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STETS Event - The Questionnaire for Teacher Interaction & The University of Reading's approach to EAP

Two talks were held at Temasek Polytechnic on Wednesday 30 November 2005, 6.30 to 8:30 pm: 1) *The Questionnaire for Teacher Interaction (QTI) - a tool for teacher reflection* by Alice Ling and 2) *The University of Reading's approach to EAP* by Peter Andrews.

Alice Ling, a lecturer from the Learning Academy at Temasek Polytechnic spoke about her research using the QTI tool. This tool focuses on the nature and quality of interpersonal relationships between teachers and students and was developed by a group of researchers in the Netherlands. Alice shared the results she obtained in her research with 70 students and 4 lecturers. Participants also enjoyed trying out the tool for themselves and the chance to examine different perspectives.

Peter Andrews, also a lecturer from the Learning Academy at Temasek Polytechnic, talked about the University of Reading's Centre for Applied Language Studies (CALS) which has been offering intensive English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses for international students who wish to gain admission to degree programmes in the UK. In the session, Peter outlined the philosophy and structure of CALS' pre-sessional English Language and Study Skills Programme. Participants enjoyed the opportunity to look at the materials used in the course and the samples of some of the assessment materials.

Sandra Kemp



Alice Ling talking about the QTI at Temasek Polytechnic



Peter Andrews and participants at the Temasek Polytechnic talk

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Tsunami Relief at Dadalla, BTS College in Galle, Sri Lanka

The ITE College East team with 12 students and two lecturers left on 16 September 2005 to provide aid and assistance to victims and displaced families affected by the tsunami in Galle, Sri Lanka.

Since the team was on a tsunami rebuilding programme, they worked mainly at the Wellawata and Welligama camps, helping to assemble and distribute beds and shelves to about 100 families in these camps. The team also paid a visit to Dadalla, BTS College in Galle. The Principal of the College, Mr Ranjit was unfortunately away but the team met the staff and students of the college.

Ms Sally Low, a lecturer from ITE, bought the books and writing materials recommended by the staff at the college and those at the bookshops in Galle, with the SGD \$500 donation from STETS. Besides purchasing and distributing the necessary books and writing materials to the college, the team also made time to teach simple English lessons and communicative, interactive games to the children at the college.

Grace Kwan

Some photos from Galle and a thank you letter from staff and students



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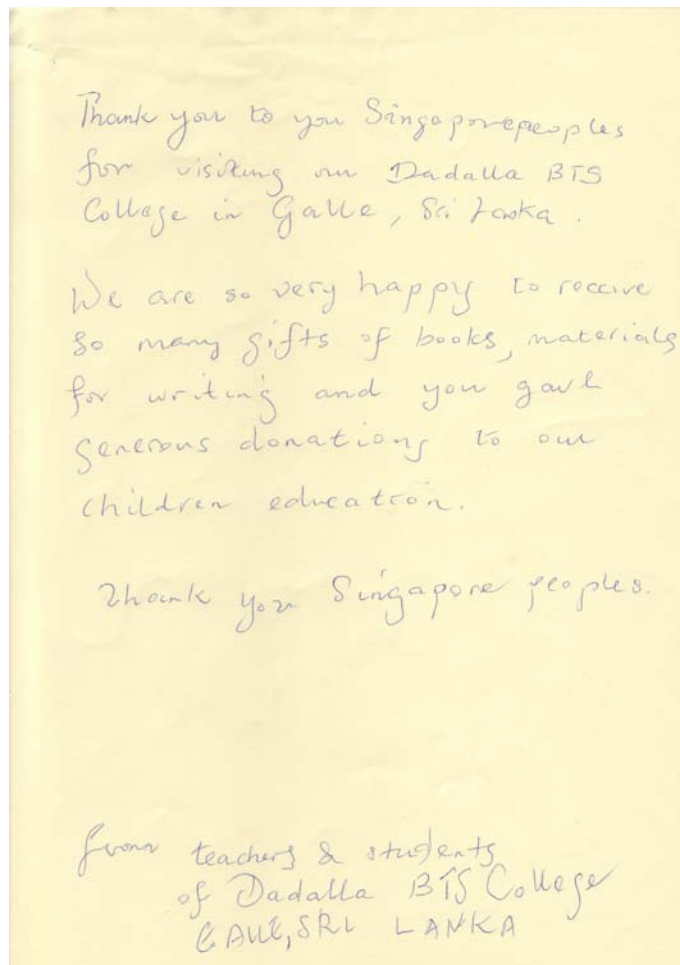
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Forthcoming Events

2006

As soon as details are confirmed STETS members will be advised. Check the STETS website for the latest updates.
www.stets.org.sg

STETS AGM

This year's AGM will be held in March. The date will be confirmed shortly.

Call for Papers

The *STETS Language & Communication Review* invites the submission of unpublished articles concerning aspects of the teaching and learning of English proficiency and communication skills in tertiary institutions in Singapore and Southeast Asia. Specifically, articles may discuss the following issues related to teaching and learning of English in tertiary education:

- syllabus and curriculum design
- testing and evaluation
- teacher training, pedagogy
- classroom practices
- computer-assisted language learning
- other issues

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We also welcome submissions of the following:

- reports of original research
- review articles
- bibliographic essays
- book reviews
- reviews of workshops (STETS-sponsored or otherwise)

Submission guidelines:

- Length - between 1500 and 6000 words.
- Abstract to be included with your submission.
- A 50-word author biography to be included with your submission.
- Your contact details to be included with your submission.

Articles will be submitted to a blind review by at least two of our Editorial Board members and / or subject reviewers. The Editor reserves the right to edit articles for format consistency when this does not alter the substance.

For more details, please refer to the *Contributor's Guidelines* which is available from your STETS representative or at the STETS website www.stets.org.sg

We encourage you to e-mail your articles. However, if you mail your article, please include a soft copy on floppy disk.

Please send your submissions to

Chief Editor, Language and Communication Review

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STETS Membership

The annual subscription fee is S\$10.00 which is renewable either at the end of June or December. STETS is a non-profit organization and does not charge GST for its membership and event registration fees.

Two types of membership are available:

Ordinary Membership: for full-time academic staff in tertiary institutions in Singapore.

Associate Membership: for anyone interested both in and outside Singapore.

Just complete the Membership Application Form which is available from your STETS representative or download a copy from www.stets.org.sg and send it to us. As a member, you can enjoy the following perks:

- opportunities to present your papers at IATEFL conferences
- 10% discount at Pansing RELC
- free copies of the L&C Review
- invitations to professional talks
- reduced workshop fees
- AGM lunches
- establishment of professional ties with all tertiary institutions in Singapore and associate members from other institutions and professional societies

Call for Speakers

We would like to ask all our readers to contribute suggestions for possible speakers and/or topics for events. The presenters could be locally-based or from overseas. The more ideas the better!

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If you or someone you know, are willing to give a talk or workshop that would benefit STETS members, please contact Sandra Kemp at secretary@stets.org.sg

If you would like to publicize in our Newsletter, your research or your institute's events, that would be interesting to our members, contact Sandra Kemp at secretary@stets.org.sg

Positions Vacant - Lecturer (Three Full-time Positions) at NUS

Applications are invited for appointment to Lectureships in the Centre for English Language Communication. Candidates must have at least a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics, TEFL/TESL, Technical Writing, English Communication Skills, Reading, Rhetoric and Composition, Computer-aided Language Learning or any other related field. Ideal candidates would have 1) at least three years of relevant teaching experience, especially at the tertiary level or with adult learners, 2) research interests in teaching-related areas, and 3) a record of publications and/or conference presentations in pedagogical research.

The Centre runs a range of courses in the various faculties of the University (for more information about the Centre, please go to its website: <http://www.nus.edu.sg/celc/>). Our main contribution is to improve students' language and communication skills as well as support the language and academic needs of the University's expanding international student, teaching and research communities. Our courses cover such areas as English Proficiency, English for Academic Purposes, English for Special Purposes, Business Communication, Technical Communication, Critical Thinking and Writing, and Graduate English. We also run courses and special programmes for the University's corporate and administrative staff. Successful candidates may be assigned to any of these courses and are expected to do teaching-related research and publish.

The commencing salary is competitive and will depend on the candidate's qualifications, experience and the level of appointment offered. A successful candidate will be required to commence work in June 2006.

Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.

Please mail, fax or e-mail your résumé, by 15 January 2006, to:

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