

OPPORTUNITITES

- To present
- To write
- To share
- To network
- To publish
- To swap
- To feel good

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A Message from the Editor

Dear TESOL members and readers,

Welcome to the 2nd issue of 2016 TESOL Kuwait Newsletter. This issue carries more of TESOL Kuwait activities and news rather than articles from our contributors. Our TESOL Board members have been working behind the scene tirelessly towards our Third International Conference to be held at GUST on November 17, 18, & 19. The theme of the conference is Innovation, Creativity, Communication: Facing Novel Challenges in TESOL. Inside the issue you will find about our keynote speakers.

You will also find a message from our President Dr. Elham Mohammed on the extensive review of the TESOL Kuwait Constitution and the By-laws conducted by the Executive committee. You will also learn more about the strategies that TESOL Kuwait has for the coming year and the steps it has conceived to make it successful.

As always, TESOL Newsletter value your contributions. Please do continue sending in your articles. I look forward to your continued support.

Moli Diva

Newsletter Editor

Mikolaj Sobocinski

Mister, Halas!!- Mikolaj Sobocinski

Gamification in Higher Education

Students do not want to learn. Let's face it. They do not want to learn - they want to know... Here and now! The sooner we realise this simple fact the better for us. And for our students. However, having understood this truth does not change our path at the slightest. Students still need to learn, and we still need to teach. After all, the promised land of knowledge in a pill or an implant belongs to science fiction, and we need to make sure that our students, no matter what age, remain engaged and motivated as these are the key factors to stress-free teaching and effective learning.

How can this be achieved? Every decade or so there is a new trend changing the previous paradigms and turning upside down our beliefs into what education should be. We already went through behaviourism, cognitivism, connectivism, and any other -ism there is in the Encyclopedia Britannica. The new wind of change has been brought by gamification. To be precise, this trend is not really that new. Gamified solutions were introduced in marketing and HR over a decade ago, and in education there are whole gamified courses, departments, and schools, which have been doing quite well since 2010. It is a decent time to weed out the charlatans and to find some beneficial solutions. However, one of the biggest problems with introducing gamification is the general misconception arising from the term itself.

What Gamification Is Not!

Gamification does NOT mean playing games.

Gamification does NOT equal game-based learning.

Gamification does NOT necessitate project-based learning.

Gamification does NOT turn learners into gamers or classrooms into playgrounds.

Gamification does NOT have to mean fun, fun, fun!

Gamification does NOT mean less work for students -- quite the contrary...

Gamification does NOT decrease the amount of preparations before and after classes...

What Gamification Is

To make it simple, gamification means using elements of games -- video games, role-playing games, board games -- in non-entertainment environments. And to be more precise, the goal of gamification is to disguise those non-entertainment environments in order to make the experience more engaging for participants, to enhance motivation, so that new habits are created and long-term goals are achieved.

How is that possible? How is that done? Usually gamifiers introduce PBLs, i.e. Points, Badges, and Leaderboards, which are common in video games. On one hand this is a perfect solution -- it works in games, it will work in the classroom. On the other hand, games are engaging not because of PBLs, but because of the immersion, because of the flow. PBLs only measure actions, represent collected awards, and compare individuals within communities. What seems to be most effective in gamified education are the following:

- basic requirements - clearly stated short-term and long-term goals with minimum requirements
- additional challenges - short and long tasks, optional and obligatory, for students who want to go the extra mile, for teams, for students who want to do something else, for slackers who struggle for survival
- levels - connect goals with skills and knowledge, show the path behind and distance to the next stage, promise rewards, but primarily, when reached, they cannot be lost (unlike grades when the average can always fluctuate)
- individualized development and skill trees - students are prodded to do what they need, what they can, what they should, but are also offered a variety of tasks fitting different skills and personalities
- path to victory - due to diverse tasks and challenges, with clear goals and requirements established for each level, students can develop in their own pace, but also in many ways -- there should not be just one type of mastery when our students come with different backgrounds, skills, likes and dislikes, desires, and personalities
- instant feedback - video games and board games are fun because after performing an action players know consequences and can reap benefits or correct their mistakes instantly
- repair mechanisms - in games you do not fail, you try again, and this is a key mechanic to any gamified course

rewards and no punishment - the biggest punishment is the lack of reward or the delay in yielding profits from one's work

There are many more elements of games, and sometimes they are organised in layers or pyramids; however, the abovementioned list presents a decent starting point for gamifying a course.

How Can Teachers Gamify Their Courses

There is no place here to present those in detail, but there are many gamifications:

- macro scale - the whole school is gamified and all subjects, tasks, and students' activities are intertwined
- micro scale - one teacher, one class, and one subject are turned into an educational game-like experience
- third path - the whole syllabus and materials stay the same as in a "traditional" school, but they are hidden under the gamified veil, e.g., a narrative about discoverers

Analogue or Digital?

Many solutions found on the Internet propagate digital platforms and complex Learning Management Systems. Although these will be extremely helpful and colourful, they will usually require a substantial amount of time to manage. So do not forget about the simple, analogue way, just like in the good old days, or like in a nursery. It works! You can use stickers, tokens, marbles, badges, pictures, walls, boards, newsletters, etc. Everything can start and finish in the classroom with a fair amount of student participation and instant feedback.

So does gamification change anything in the classroom? No, it actually does not. It simply allows to manage students, an engaged bunch of attentive listeners, just as we always wanted. Yes, because students become attentive listeners, they consider their own actions, and after making mistakes they strive to make something better of the classroom environment and the whole education experience.

About the author

Mikolaj Sobocinski has 15 years of experience in higher education, in state and private sector, as a teacher, tutor, conference organiser, exchange coordinator, author of workshops, presentations, and academic articles. Since 2010 he introduced gamification in his courses at English Departments and Gamedec - Game Studies & Design. He develops his passions to motivate young learners and to support teachers in their professional development.

Tesol KUWAIT 2016 Conference Nov 17, 18, 19

*Innovation, Creativity, Communi-
cation:*

Facing Novel challenges in TESOL

At GUST

Keynote Speakers:

Prof. David Crystal, University. of Wales

Prof. Karen Price, Boston University

Prof. Farzad Sharifan, Monash University

Prof. Mihaela Irimia, Bucharest University

Things you can do at an open meeting:

- * Renew your membership
- * Become a member
- * Attend professional development workshops
- * Receive certificates of attendance
- * Get involved in Interest Sections
- * Network with colleagues
- * Share your thoughts and ideas with Board Members



TESOL Kuwait is a professional organization for anyone involved in teaching non-native speakers of English in an English medium environment. Although many of our members teach English, membership is not limited to English teachers. We hope to have more involvement from subject area teachers in order to provide focused professional development opportunities.

Our **MEMBERSHIP** consists of professionals from in and around Kuwait. Currently a majority of the members work in Higher Education, but with the development of the organization we hope to increase representation from primary, secondary, language, and trade schools. Contact current members to see how you can become involved or become a member.

Message from the President— Dr. Elham Mohammed

The Executive Committee of the TESOL-Kuwait Board has conducted an extensive review of the TESOL-Kuwait Constitution and Bylaws to ensure that these important documents support the current status of TESOL-Kuwait and the growth of the organization. The result is a Constitution that is more inclusive. We expanded the definition of the organization to include: *teachers who use the English Language to teach students who are not native English speakers*. We also expanded the Membership definition to include *teachers who use the English language to teach students who are not native English speakers*.

Another focus on the Executive Committee was to simplified Executive Board to make it more function and effective n decision-making. The Executive Committee will now be the elected officers:

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT - 1 YEAR

PRESIDENT - 1 YEAR

PRESIDENT-ELECT - 1 YEAR

SECRETARY - 2 YEARS

TREASURER - 1 YEAR

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR - 2 YEARS

ALL OF THE APPOINTED (UNELECTED) POSITIONS REPORT TO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS AND MAY CONVENE COMMITTEES TO SUPPORT THE WORK TO BE CONDUCTED.

Another more focus of the updated Constitution is a clearer focus on the Interest Sections. Due to the abbreviation “IS” and in order to take advantage of the more common term “SIG”, the “Interest Sections” were re-named “Special Interest Groups”. Also, instead of mandating specific SIGs, the amended Constitution calls for grassroots development of SIGs based on the membership leading and forming and associating themselves into SIGs. Instead of having the SIG Chairs on the Executive Board, they will report to the President-elect. SIGs must be productive according to their own defined performance indicators in order to continue their existence. The Constitutional Amendments were approved unanimously by Executive Board on 17th September 2016. The amended Constitution must also be approved by 2/3rds of the membership to become effective. Therefore, the amended Constitution has been posted on the TESOL-Kuwait website for membership review in preparation for the vote to approve the new Constitution during the Annual Meeting in November.

SIG— Development Program

A major focus of the 2016-17 TESOL-Kuwait Strategy is to develop the Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

SIGs are the backbone of TESOL International and other TESOL affiliates around the world. They drive the TESOL program, providing content for meetings, conferences and conventions. A SIG is a special kind of knowledge network; a Community of Practice (CoP), i.e. an important component of the Knowledge Economy, which Kuwait is focused on developing.

The current SIGs include

Teacher Development	Primary Education
Secondary Education	Adult Education
Higher Education	Special Education
Private Sector	Government sector
TESOL Toastmasters	English for Specific Purposes
Students	eLearning

The most active TESOL-Kuwait SIGs during 2016 have been:

1. TESOL Toastmasters
2. eLearning
3. Teacher Development
4. Higher Education

There are challenges to TESOL-Kuwait growth as a professional development organization. Kuwait civil society culture and law are not especially conducive to freedom of association. Perhaps more immediate impact is caused by the fact that the Kuwait government does require professional educational licensing and therefore professional development activities are optional, not a requirement. Those challenges have negatively affected the level of engagement that is needed to make a measurable impact on ESL teaching and teaching in English to non-native speakers in Kuwait. TESOL-Kuwait leaders wanted to motivate members to collaborate more to build the SIGs and the organization.

The solution that TESOL-Kuwait has developed is to define and implement a highly motivating SIG Development Program that will result in the development of a measurable increase in relevant individual and organization knowledge assets and the growth of the organization. Thanks to the U.S. Embassy, Kuwait Cultural Affairs Office provision of a grant, a program has been developed that includes all expenses paid attendance at the TESOL International Convention in Seattle, Washington March 21-24, 2017 for five TESOL-Kuwait SIG leaders

The detailed procedure for the implementation of the program is still under development. However, an overview of the program is that each SIG leader will develop a SIG Action Plan, including:

You+9 other people committed to collaborate

Research Topic and Thesis that contributes to the development of ESL education in Kuwait

Knowledge Development Plan

By May 2017 submit proposal to present the SIG Development Project in 2018 TESOL Convention

Implement translational project in Kuwait ESL education to test Recommended Approach

The next steps in implementing this program include:

Executive Board will develop a detailed SIG Development Plan selection procedure

The procedure will be published by November 1st.

A seminar about the Procedure will be conducted during the Annual Conference

Proposed SIG Development Work Plans will be submitted to the Executive Committee by December 31, 2016.

Executive Committee will approve all compliant work plans by January 15th

SIGs will select work plans to be implemented by February 1st.

This will be an exciting program that will lead to multi-dimensional growth of TESOL-Kuwait, both in numbers and in the development of Knowledge Assets through the development of Knowledge Networks, i.e. SIGs. This multi-dimensional growth will lead to greater credibility and reputation in the Kuwait education community.

A few PD opportunities.

These listed events are not sponsored or endorsed by Tesol KUWAIT

October 2016

6–7 (Asia) [2nd LITU–CULI International Conference](#), "ELT Limited," Thailand. Email ravirojana@gmail.com.

7–8 (North America) [I–TESOL Conference](#), Utah, USA. Email nick_david@byu.edu.

12–15 (North America) [WIDA 2016 National Conference](#), "Drawing on Life's Experiences: Designing Brighter Futures" Pennsylvania, USA. Email conferences@wida.us

13–15 (South America) [51st ASOCOPI Annual Conference](#), "Technology in ELT: Achievements and Challenges for English Language Development," Colombia. Email asocopicolombia@gmail.com.

13–16 (North America) [ANUPI 2016 International Conference](#), "Unleashing the Power of ELT Beyond the Classroom," Mexico. Email msegui@anupi.org.mx.

14–15 (North America) GATESOL 2016, "#Hot Topics @ English Learners," Georgia, USA. Email gatesolwashington@gamil.com.

15 (Asia) [The 2016 PKETA International Conference](#), "The Directions of Teacher Education in the Multicultural Era," Korea. Email yanghee1027@gmail.com.

November 2016

1 (North America) [ARKTESOL 2016 State Conference](#), Arkansas, USA. Email tricia.kerr@arkansas.gov.

2–4 (Europe) [Languages & The Media 2016 11th International Conference on Language Transfer in Audiovisual Media](#), Germany. Email info@languages-media.com

3–5 (North America) [XXIII Sociocultural Theory & Second Language Learning Research Working Group Meeting](#), Florida, USA. Email sctsl@gmail.com.

4–5 (North America) [NYS TESOL 2016 Annual Conference](#), "Collaboration in the Classroom and Beyond", New York. vpconference@nystesol.org

December 2016

1–2 (Europe) [The Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture](#), "Voices of the Future: The Sound of Many Languages and Nations in Partnership," Italy. Email info@theworldwideforum.org.

9–10 (Asia) [11th International Symposium on Teaching English at Tertiary Level](#), "Rethinking ELT in Higher Education". Hong Kong. istetl@polyu.edu.hk

January 2017

16–17 (Asia) [Fourth International Conference on Languages, Literature and Society 2017](#), "Interdisciplinary Conversations about Language, Politics and Mobility," Singapore. Email ppca3000@gmail.com.

23–24 (Africa) [NileTESOL Conference](#), Egypt. Email president@niletesol.org.

February 2017

2–3 (Asia) [The International Conference on Current Issues of Languages, Dialects and Linguistics](#), Iran. Email info@pahi.ir.

2–3 (Middle East) [The International Conference on Current Issues of Arabic Language Teaching and Learning, Literature and Translation](#), Ahwaz/Khouzestan/Iran. Email info@pahi.ir

24 (Europe) [6th Bremen Symposion](#), "The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – how do we deal with its gaps?" Germany. Email symposion@fremdsprachenzentrum-bremen.de

. Email hupe.international@gmail.com

- See more at: <https://www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn/calendar-of-events#sthash.12XguQl7.dpuf>

Remember to be at the Open Meeting

on

October 1 at AOU 10:00 am