FP Jareeda

In this Issue

Welcome to issue 31 of FP Jareeda

Mondher Chaabane, Chair of the Foundation Program's Newsletter Committee, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

Welcome to issue 31 of the Foundation Program's newsletter, FP Jareeda.

This edition includes an article about a recent achievement of one of distinguished faculty at FPDE, Dr. Okon Effiong, who was elected President of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) International Association. Another major highlight of this issue is a story about empowering students to become classroom leaders. We are also excited to share important events for both faculty and students namely Al-Qabas Program and the English Business Showcase.

This edition also features an interview with David Coupland about the use of the "explanation effect" in the classroom. In addition, there are interesting articles which focus on the integration of AI tools in ESL classrooms, enhancing student engagement and teacher well-being.

Dr. Mondher Chaabane: Photograph courtesy of Mondher Chaabane

My Journey Through the TESOL Presidency Pipeline

Okon Effiong, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

Attending my first TESOL Association Convention in 2010 marked a turning point in my career. It sparked a deep desire to actively contribute to and serve the TESOL profession. At the time, I was disheartened to see that Africa, a vast and diverse continent, had only four TESOL affiliates. Rather than critique from the sidelines, I chose to act. In 2011, I joined the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which I believed was the ideal platform to address the imbalance. Over four years, including two as Chair, I worked passionately to advance the committee's mission. One significant achievement was the implementation of affordable K-12 Day during TESOL convention for US-based K-12 teachers.

While engaged with TESOL, I was also elected President of the now-defunct Qatar TESOL (QTESOL) for a two-year term.

My vision was ambitious: to elevate QTESOL to rival TESOL Arabia in size and influence. Unfortunately, I did not get enough support, and I stepped down after one year. Despite this setback, there was a notable achievement. I brought the 11th Annual QTESOL Conference to Qatar University (QU) in 2015. This milestone gave rise to the FPDE Annual ELT (English Language Teaching) Conference, which has since evolved from the "FPDE ELT Conference" to the "QU ELT Conference", hosting eight successive events. Although QTESOL became defunct, FPDE stepped in to provide essential professional development opportunities for educators across Qatar and beyond.

Following my departure from QTESOL, I turned my focus to a new initiative: founding Africa TESOL, now known as Africa ELTA (English language teacher association). In 2016, we held our inaugural conference in Sudan with just four affiliates. Today, Africa ELTA boasts 25 affiliates across Africa, over 5,000 members in 94 countries, and a tradition of hosting rotating conferences across the continent. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the association adapted with virtual events. Remarkably, Africa ELTA has flourished without any corporate funding, a testament to its resilience and teambuilding spirit.

Throughout this journey, my commitment to TESOL International Association remained unwavering. I served as co-editor of the EFL Interest Section newsletter and later as Chair-elect of the interest section. I was also on the Nominating Committee for a year and went on to serve on the Board of Directors from 2020 to 2023. In my final year on the Board, I was privileged to lead the Finance Committee as TESOL Treasurer. After 13 years of continuous service, being elected TESOL President is a rewarding culmination of my efforts.

As I step into my new role as TESOL President, I aim to elevate TESOL's status as the global authority in English language teaching and learning. I also cherish the honor of winning the British Council ELTons Award for Outstanding Achievement, alongside Africa ELTA that was chosen as a corporate winner for Outstanding Achievement.

Reflecting on my journey, I feel immense fulfilment and readiness for the challenges ahead. I am eager to make a lasting impact as TESOL President and continue advancing our profession. I would like to seize this opportunity to thank Dr. Saba Al-Qadi, the Dean of General Studies and my colleagues in FPDE who have celebrated my victory during the potluck event on December 4th. You have always stood by and supported me through this journey.

Dr. Okon Effiong celebrating his election as President of TESOL International Association with Dr. Saba Al-Qadi, Dean of General Studies; Dr. Hala Hadba, Associate Director for Academic Affairs; Mrs. Hayat Al-Samad, Assistant Director for Student Affairs and Mrs. Shamsa Alrushaidi, Lecturer of English: Photographs courtesy of Shamsa Alrushaidi

Congrats to Our Newly Elected Leaders!

PRESIDENT-ELECT
Okon Effiong

LEARN MORE > tesol.org/news

Dr Okon
TESOL International President
Elect 2025

Congratulations

Dr. Okon Effiong, President-Elect of TESOL International Association: Photograph courtesy of www.tesol.org

Al-Qabas Program Fall 2024

Hayat Al-Samad, Assistant Director for Student Affairs, Foundation Program

Under the theme "*For a Successful University Experience*," Qatar University's Foundation Program (QUFP), under the Deanship of General Studies and in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE), launched Al-Qabas Program 2024 (7th edition) on November 18th, 2024 for high school students. 230 high school students from 14 schools participated in the program. Dr. Saba Al-Qadi Dean of General Studies, Dr. Hala Hadba, Associate Director for Academic Affairs, and representatives from the ministry attended the event.

Al-Qabas male students Ceremony: Photograph courtesy of Rabab Ismael

Al-Qabas program educates high school students from grades 10 and 11 about university life and the skills required to succeed in their university studies, and improve their English and math skills and testing strategies to enhance their successful enrollment in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and health majors at Qatar University. It also showcases QU's learning environment to attract students.

Students attending one of Al-Qabas program workshops: Photograph courtesy of Qatar University

230 male and female students and their academic advisors attended various sessions. In one session, "Let's Design a Useful Mobile App", students brainstormed and developed an app idea that addresses a specific problem or fulfills a need. Then, they posted a concise description of their app concept on Padlet, including its purpose and target audience. Using Marvel App, students created a prototype of their app, focusing on layout. Finally, students presented their app design.

Dr. Saba Al-Qadi, Dean of General Studies; Mrs. Hayat Al-Samad, Assistant Director for Student Affairs during *Design A Useful App* session: Photograph courtesy of Dr. Hala Hadba

Testing strategies were emphasized throughout Al-Qabas Program. Students attended sessions focusing on test-taking strategies for International English Language Testing System (IELTS), American College Testing (ACT), Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and QU placement tests. To enhance successful enrollment in the university, Mr. Mosa Jomat, Senior Student Specialist at the Foundation Program and Dr. Mohamad Ejbara, Psychometrician and Test Development Specialist at the Qatar University Testing Center, talked about different international exams and placement tests required for successful enrollment in STEM and health sectors.

Mr. Mosa Jomat introducing international exams and placement tests: Photograph courtesy Qatar University

Al-Qabas Program 2024 presenters were able to create active and engaging sessions. An academic advisor from Mohammed Bin Abdul Wahab Secondary School for Boys wrote: "The organization was excellent and much appreciated. The students benefited from the information provided regarding standardized tests". The student survey showed a high satisfaction rate among students regarding how much they benefited from the sessions. Some students stated in the survey: "I benefited and gained valuable information. There were various lectures, all of which were informative. The instructors who gave the lectures explained in a helpful and clear manner."

Math skills session: Photograph courtesy of Rabab Ismael

With its numerous versions, Al-Qabas Program remains dedicated to bridging the gap between school and university life, thereby contributing to the community, and enhancing student success. It also offers support and resources to help students handle the challenges of higher education and make informed choices. In short, Al-Qabas Program empowers students to thrive academically and personally.

Al-Qabas Program poste announcement: Visual courtesy of Foundation Program Student

From Classroom Learner to Classroom Leader

Mohammad Hosam Al Nahas, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

When I first met Sultan Al-Harami, I did not expect that he would be confidently delivering an entire lesson to his peers within just a few weeks. It all began during a conversation in my C001 class about careers, where Sultan expressed an interest in teaching and considered changing his major. His curiosity resonated, and I felt compelled to nurture that spark.

I began by giving Sultan small opportunities to teach in class, such as inviting him to the front to explain vocabulary or grammar points. I also gave him a copy of *Who Moved My Cheese?* to read at home and present to the class. Sultan made remarkable progress, and the students enjoyed his teaching sessions. His humor made the lessons engaging and enjoyable.

By a stroke of serendipity, the Professional Development Committee approached me to deliver a demo lesson, which I thought would be an ideal opportunity for Sultan to shine. I talked to Sultan about this, suggesting that he collaborate with his classmates, Yousuf Al-Lahlouk, Ghanim Al-Abri, and Mesfer Al-Adbi, to deliver the lesson as a team, and he was enthusiastic about the idea. Together, we discussed the lesson plan, and Sultan practiced with the support of his friends, which proved to be invaluable for him emotionally.

Sultan's Demo Lesson

Sultan followed the key stages of an effective language lesson, beginning with a warm-up and incorporating elicitation techniques and concept-checking questions (CCQs) throughout to gauge comprehension. Before the lesson began, Sultan asked the guests for feedback, demonstrating his eagerness to grow as a teacher and his commitment to self-improvement.

Sultan Al-Harami teaching different stages of the lesson: Photographs courtesy of Mohammad Hosam Al Nahas

The lesson focused on vocabulary and grammar from Unit 5: *Challenges*. Sultan and his peers outlined the lesson aims, starting with a discussion on mental versus physical challenges, illustrated with images and riddles. They skillfully engaged the class through interactive discussions before introducing the new vocabulary, which the students practiced together in a group exercise. The lesson then transitioned to teaching the Simple Past Tense, beginning with a video and moving to personalized discussions where students shared their past experiences. Sultan and his team relied heavily on elicitation and encouraged students to self-correct their mistakes, creating a supportive and interactive learning environment.

The lesson ended with an engaging game of "Hot Seat" where a student guessed a target word based on clues from the class. Sultan brought his sense of humor into the game, joking, "You only have one minute. If you sit any longer, the hot seat will catch fire!" The class erupted in laughter. In the end, Sultan and his team invited me to play in the "Hot Seat" game. Instead of a vocabulary word, they wrote "We love you" and gave me clues until I guessed it—a heartwarming end to an exceptional lesson.

Sultan wrapped up the lesson with a summary, reinforcing the vocabulary and grammar covered. His students were engaged, with plenty of participation, encouragement, and applause.

Reflections and Feedback

After the lesson, I asked Sultan how he thought it went. He said, "It was a truly rewarding experience. I felt excitement and nervousness at the beginning, but as the lesson progressed, I enjoyed the interaction with the students. Seeing their engagement made me feel proud and motivated to keep improving as an educator."

Ali Salem Al-Marri, one of the students, said, "I liked participating in discussions and group activities. Sultan made learning fun. It was a great experience!" Our colleague, Manal Cooper, known as Emme, remarked, "The lesson was a beautifully orchestrated performance that showcased students' language knowledge, presentation skills, and teamwork. I was impressed by these students' confidence and sense of humor."

Inspiring Future Educators

This rewarding experience has reinforced my belief that nurturing the next generation of educators starts by encouraging those students who show an early passion for teaching. By giving them opportunities to explore and develop their talents, we foster their personal growth and ensure that our communities are enriched with skilled, passionate educators. Sultan's journey is a reminder of the profound impact that guidance and encouragement can have.

Mr. Mohammad Hosam Al Nahas with his student Sultan Al-Harami and his classmates : Photograph courtesy of Mohammad Hosam Al Nahas

Foundation Program Hosts Successful Business English Showcase

Conan Kmiecik, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

On November 20, Qatar University's Foundation Department of English (FPDE), in partnership with the College of Business and Economics (CBE), hosted the highly anticipated Business English Showcase. This event, part of the Business English Entrepreneurship Project, challenged students to apply business knowledge and enhance English communication skills, focusing on innovative ideas tailored to the Qatari market.

A total of 61 female teams and 17 male teams participated, presenting their creative business concepts to university members and business professionals. The event also featured the Ignite Pitch Competition, organized by the Center for Entrepreneurship and Organizational Excellence (CEOE). Six teams competed in the pitch competition, presenting their ideas to a panel of judges, while all teams took part in a one-minute pitch exercise aimed at building confidence and improving communication skills.

The Ignite Pitch Competition awarded three top teams. First place and 6,000 QAR went to Flowstock, a B2B marketplace for surplus goods. Second place and 4,800 QAR were claimed by Mini Chefs, which promotes healthy nutrition for children, and third place went to Alira, a modern luxury brand for men, earning 4,000 QAR.

The Ignite Pitch Competition first place award to Flowstock: Photograph courtesy of Conan Kmiecik

Other awards recognized exceptional projects in both the male and female showcases. Among the male participants, Off Track Wash, a service catering to off-road vehicles, received the Entrepreneurial

Spirit Award, while Coffee Clean, combining a car wash and coffee shop, won the Most Innovative Product or Service Award. For the female teams, HerCar Care, a car wash by women for women, earned the Entrepreneurial Spirit Award. Sidrose, a beauty brand utilizing traditional plants, won the Most Promising Startup Award, and Taste of Qatar, which offers ingredient boxes for authentic Qatari cuisine, received the Most Innovative Product or Service Award.

Most Promising Startup Award to Taste of Qatar: Photograph courtesy of Conan Kmiecik

The event was attended by prominent figures, including Dr. Saba Al-Qadi, Dean of General Studies; Professor Rana Sobh, Dean of CBE; Dr. Saeed Albana, Director of CEOE; Dr. Hala Hadba, Associate Director of FP; and Dr. Abir Ahmed, Head of FPDE. Faculty members praised the students for their enthusiasm, ingenuity, and communication skills.

This successful showcase reflected the dedication of the Business English course team, strong collaboration with partners, and support from FP leadership. It also highlighted the students' entrepreneurial potential and ability to succeed in the Qatari market. The course team aims to strengthen its collaboration with the CEOE to explore innovative strategies that empower students to generate original business ideas tailored to the needs of the Qatari market and refine their skills in preparation for the upcoming Showcase Event in the Spring Semester of 2025.

Enhancing Student Engagement and Satisfaction: The Role of Learning Catalytics in Education

Diana Reyos Malabanan, Lecturer of Math, Foundation Program

"Active engagement is the cornerstone of effective learning in the digital age."

As technology continues to shape higher education, platforms like Learning Catalytics are becoming central to the learning experience. Learning Catalytics fosters active participation in the learning process by offering interactive real-time opportunities for student engagement. A recent survey evaluated student satisfaction with the platform, providing insights into its impact on their education.

Understanding the Role of Learning Catalytics in Education

Developed by Pearson, Learning Catalytics is a web-based platform that boosts student engagement. It enables educators to pose questions, including multiple-choice ones, and facilitates interactive discussions. Students are asked to respond in real time using their devices, promoting deeper learning through instant feedback and student collaboration.

As a "bring your own device" system, Learning Catalytics allows educators to assess students' understanding and adjust lessons in real time. It assigns participation grades and offers several question types that can be used before, during, or after class. Students can send direct messages to instructors while responding, enabling real-time assistance. The platform also features a seat map that helps instructors track correct and incorrect responses. It provides flexible response modes (Figure 1), including "Instructor-Led Synchronous", "Automated Synchronous", "Self-Paced", "Self-Test", and "Team-Based Assessment".
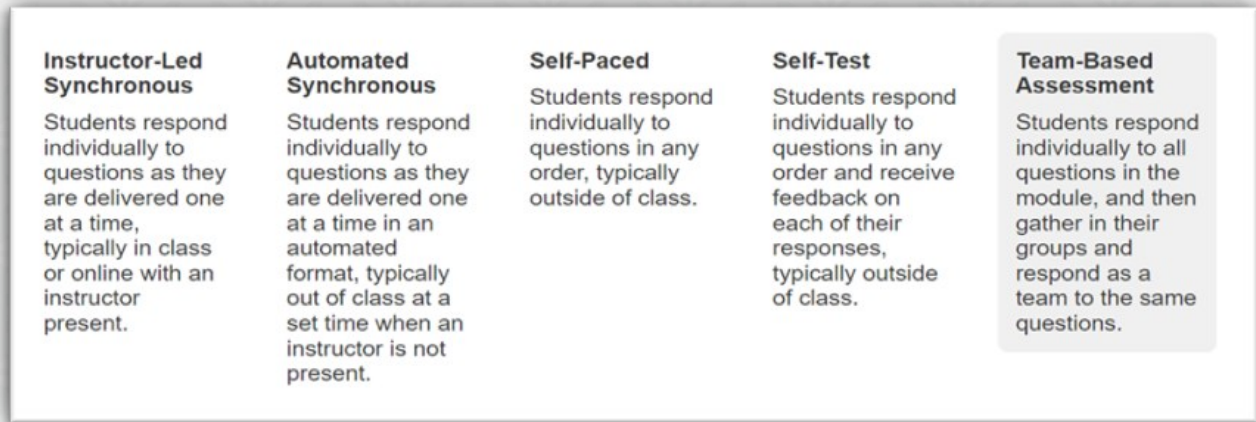

Figure 1. Module Response Type: Visual courtesy of Diana Reyos Malabanan

Survey Overview and Key Findings

A survey focused on student satisfaction with Learning Catalytics including its ease of use, contribution to learning, and overall effectiveness. Thanks to its intuitive design, most students found the platform easy to use, which allowed them to focus on content rather than technology. Its user-friendly interface supports both in-class and at-home learning activities.

The survey also revealed that Learning Catalytics improves understanding through active learning. Most students agreed that the platform helped them grasp complex topics more effectively. By using interactive questions [Figure 2], Learning Catalytics reinforces ideas and aids information retention more efficiently than traditional methods. The platform's immediate feedback feature was highly valued, enabling students to assess their understanding in real time, identify knowledge gaps, and reflect on their learning.
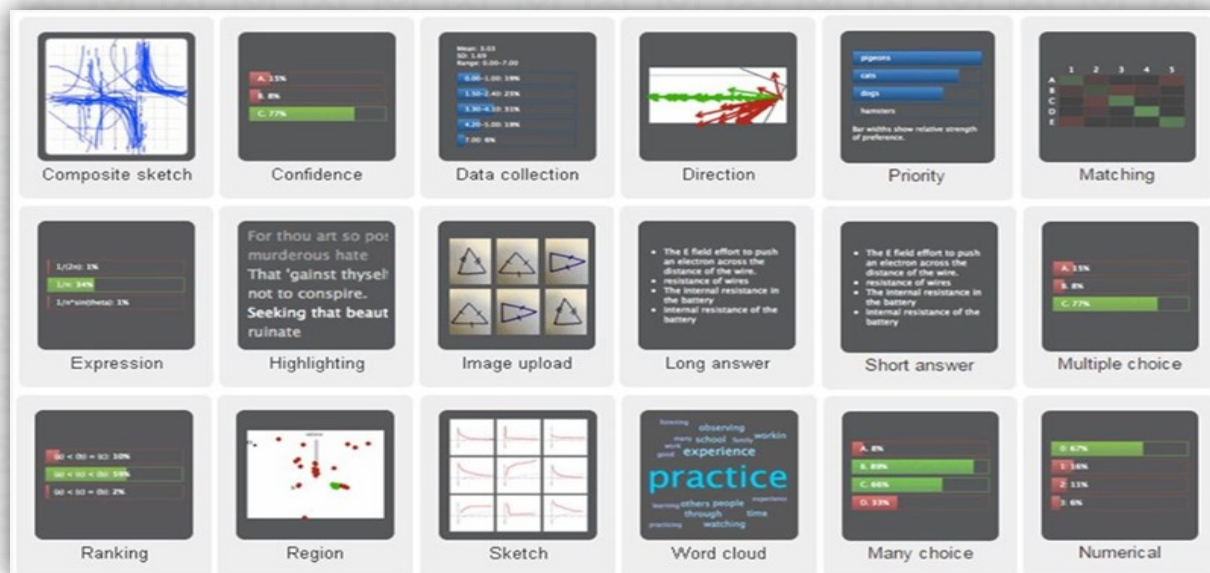

Figure 1. Different question types: Visual courtesy of Diana Reyos Malabanan

Most of the surveyed students rated their experience with Learning Catalytics highly, with most giving a 5 out of 5, indicating strong satisfaction. However, some students found Learning Catalytics tasks, including homework, time-consuming. As a result, streamlining these activities could enhance engagement without overwhelming students.

Importance of Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction is key to academic success. Platforms like Learning Catalytics, which offer interactive and feedback-driven experiences, foster engagement and motivation. Learning Catalytics can further enrich the learning experience by making small improvements based on feedback.

Learning Catalytics : Visual courtesy of www.pearson.com

New Faculty

Baya Maraf

Hello everyone! I am Dr. Baya Maraf, and I am thrilled to be part of this prestigious establishment of QU. I received my PhD in English language teaching from Eastern Mediterranean University in Cyprus in 2022.

Before that, I worked as a lecturer in Algeria, Cyprus, Turkey and Oman. I immensely enjoyed my time in every country I worked in and learned a lot from these diverse experiences. During my 12 years of experience, I managed to do more than teaching; I published articles, attended conferences, and helped students to submit their graduation projects. However, I will always say that teaching and meeting students in classrooms is my favorite part of this journey.

I enjoy writing, painting, shopping and watching movies/series in my free time. I believe Qatar is the perfect destination to do all these activities and raise the baby I expect.

Baya Maraf: Photograph courtesy of Baya Maraf

Montaser Jassouma

Hello everyone! My name is Montaser Jassouma, and I am thrilled to join the Foundation Program at QU. I am an ESL/EAP instructor and teacher trainer with over 12 years of experience and a deep passion for teaching. My journey began with a B.A. in English Literature and Language and an M.A. in TESOL from Aleppo University. Before coming to Doha, I worked in Istanbul, Turkiye, where I taught and coordinated programs at several universities.

I hold a DELTA Diploma from Cambridge University, Cambridge's Train the Trainer certification, and a Management in Education certificate from the Nile Institute. These qualifications have shaped my learner-centered approach, emphasized technology integration, and fostered a positive learning environment.

Outside of academia, I am a sports enthusiast. As a former professional basketball player, I bring teamwork, discipline, and resilience into my teaching practice. I am looking forward to a great year together!

Montaser Jassouma: Photograph courtesy of Montaser Jassouma

New Faculty

Gufran Jafer

Hello everyone! My name is Gufran, and I am excited to be part of the incredible Foundation team at Qatar University. I hold an M.A. degree in Linguistics and Applied Language Studies from Carleton University, Canada, and I am certified by TESL Ontario as an ESL instructor and a methodology/theory trainer.

I have trained and observed aspiring language teachers on their journey to becoming ESL instructors. With over 10 years of experience teaching ESL, EAP, ESP, TESL/TEFL, Communication, and English courses at Canadian post-secondary institutions, I bring a strong background in language education. As a certified language assessor, I hold multiple certifications from various Canadian institutions.

In the classroom, I focus on fostering a supportive and interactive environment where students can build confidence in their language skills and apply them in daily life. Outside of teaching, I enjoy exploring new places and restaurants with my family.

Gufran Jafer: Photograph courtesy of Gufran Jafer

Marwan Dar Ali

Marwan Dar Ali: Photograph courtesy of Marwan Dar Ali

Hello, my name is Marwan Dar Ali. I hold a master's degree in applied Linguistics and have been teaching English for approximately 19 years, with professional experience spanning Jordan, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia.

As a native Arabic speaker with specialized training in error analysis and contrastive linguistics, I have effectively anticipated common language challenges faced by Arabic-speaking students learning English. This expertise allows me to design tailored remedial plans to address specific areas of difficulty. I am deeply committed to continuous professional development—a focus that aligns perfectly with the outstanding opportunities provided by Qatar University. I also teach Arabic as a foreign language to non-native speakers, an experience that has enriched my exposure to diverse cultures, languages, histories, and traditions. This multicultural engagement has also fueled my interest in teaching Middle Eastern studies, comparative theologies, politics, and literature.

I enjoy swimming and playing football. However, my true passion is doing martial arts, particularly kickboxing and Aikido.

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Michael Taylor

Hi, everyone! My name is Michael Taylor and I have been teaching for over 25 years.

I graduated with a MA in TESL from West Chester University in the US in 1999. I have taught in the intensive English programs of Drexel University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Wayne State University in the US as well as in special summer programs at the University of Michigan. I first taught abroad for UAE University in Al Ain from 2004 to 2006, then taught for a couple of years in Yemen. Later, I spent 11 years at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah.

My oldest daughter was 1 ½ years old when we moved to Jeddah where my other daughter was born. As a family, we love this part of the world, and we love travelling.

Michael Taylor : Photograph courtesy of Michael Taylor

Text-To-Speech Converters – this AI tool is worth your time

Erika Van Winden, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

Incorporating high-quality audio materials is often one of the most challenging aspects of material creation for ESL teachers. Typically, teachers may search the internet for an audio file that matches the chapter's topic and the course's language level. The second option is for teachers to create and record a script themselves. However, these options often prove very time-consuming and lack flexibility. Fortunately, ChatGPT and Text-to-speech (TTS) converters offer ESL teachers a powerful combination of tools for creating and enhancing listening files in a few steps.

The first step is to ask ChatGPT to generate a reading text by providing it with the relevant vocabulary, topic, and the students' target English level. The second step is to put the generated text into a TTS converter (such as ttsmaker.com) and convert it into an audio file. These two steps often require less than 10 minutes in total.

The tool ttsmaker.com has been my favorite text-to-speech converter for several reasons. First, it is free. It also allows the customization of the speed, accent, and style of speech, which makes it easier to cater to different learner proficiency levels.

Reading tool : Visual courtesy of Twee

For instance, slower-paced, clear audio can be used for A1 learners, while faster, more complex materials can be utilized to challenge advanced students. Additionally, the possibility of using different speaking styles

enhances students' listening comprehension and prepares them for real-world situations. Lastly, the audio file can be downloaded and saved to a laptop or sent to students.
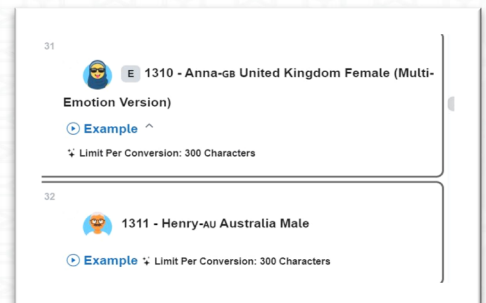
Different accents available with ttsmaker: Visual courtesy of ttsmaker

While the free version has some limitations, such as a weekly cap of 20,000 characters and a maximum of 3,000 characters per conversion, I have not found these restrictions to be bothersome. Overall, incorporating text-to-speech converters into material creation enables teachers to save time, align the activity to their course objectives, and provide students with engaging and diverse audio experiences customized to their learning needs.

Integrating AI in ESL Classrooms: A Series of Training Sessions

Imad Al-Hawamdeh, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

The Foundation Program Department of English (FPDE) at Qatar University, in collaboration with The Professional Development (PD) and Conference Committee, organized a series of training sessions, led by Samuel Gravel. Gravel, a renowned Business English trainer and corporate training manager focused on the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in language learning and course design. These sessions, held from the 15th to the 18th of September, 2024, were designed to equip FPDE faculty with strategies to effectively incorporate AI into their curricula.

The first session, AI-Powered Course Planning and Materials Development, highlighted how large language models (LLMs) can assist faculty in creating more interactive and communicative content. Gravel demonstrated how teachers can use AI to create personalized content and formative assessments aligned with Second Language Acquisition (SLA) principles. He explained the role of AI in fostering autonomous learning and collaborative environments, making the classroom more engaging and learner-centered.

In the second session, titled Empowering Students with AI in the Classroom, Gravel introduced tools that enhance students' learning experiences, such as custom Generative Pre-trained Transformers (GPTs) and *chatbot* computer programs that simulate human conversation. He explained that students can develop critical thinking and communication skills by shifting focus from product-oriented tasks to process-driven learning. According to Gravel, this helps students move beyond traditional tasks toward a more holistic approach to learning. For example, it engages them in simulated job interviews instead of writing CVs or job letters.

In the final session, Review, Reflection, and Drafting an AI Policy, faculty reflected on how AI could be integrated into ESL education while maintaining academic integrity and promoting active learning. Guided by Gravel, participants drafted AI policies that fit their classroom needs, ensuring AI is used as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for pedagogical expertise.

This series of workshops offered an enriching exploration of AI's possibilities in ESL education. By the end of the sessions, faculty gained practical knowledge on how to integrate AI in a way that enhances teaching practices and student engagement, ensuring that FPDE classrooms remain innovative and future-focused.

Samuel Gravel conducting workshops for FPDE faculty: Photographs courtesy Mhammed Chadi

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Teacher Well-being and Student Achievement

Paul Ames, Lecturer of English & Co-chair of Newsletter Committee, Foundation Program

Well-being – what exactly is it? Dictionaries simply define it as a state of being comfortable, healthy or happy. This broad definition implies that well-being can be affected both positively and negatively by events in an individual's personal and professional life. Teaching is a unique profession; unlike many other jobs, one has to perform their duties despite not feeling well. Though, are teachers aware that their well-being may greatly impact students' success or the attainment of their learning outcomes? Often, practitioners consider other factors such as students' motivation, student-teacher rapport, lesson planning, material appropriacy, teaching strategies, and student engagement. A reflection on personal well-being may often be far from a teacher's consideration.

However, teacher well-being has been found to play an essential role in the learning process. Madigan and Kim (2020) found a relationship between teacher burnout and worsening student academic achievement. Similar research (Granziera et al., 2023) also showed that educational settings reporting higher levels of teacher emotional exhaustion resulted in below-average student achievement. *Teacher fatigue may also result in less effective lesson planning and a negative perception of students* (Frenzel et al., 2021). Furthermore, it can cause a feeling of classroom detachment, resulting in higher teacher absenteeism and lower student success (Miller et al., 2007). Therefore, it appears that a teacher's negative well-being can adversely affect student achievement.

Addressing this issue requires understanding the underlying *workplace* factors that cause negative well-being. These include increased levels of stress (Curry & O'Brien, 2012), increasingly burdensome workloads (Buchanan et al., 2013), and emotional fatigue (Granziera et al., 2023), which lead to eventual teacher burnout (Antoniou et al., 2013). Unsurprisingly, Grenville-Cleave and Boniwell's (2012) research found that teachers considered their well-being lower than other professions.

Accordingly, what can be done to address low teacher well-being? Brouskeli et al. (2018) state that education systems should provide and prioritize initiatives that support teacher well-being. Çimen and Özgan (2018) claim that more unity and teamwork between colleagues can foster positive well-being. However, addressing the negative conditions created by educational institutions themselves may be the main solution. These institutions have the power to keep workloads manageable to reduce stress, fatigue, and ultimately burnout. By doing so, such institutions can demonstrate a care for faculty well-being and a concern for its impact on student academic achievement.

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The Explanation Effect: An interview with David Coupland

Kenneth Downes, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

Interviewer: Language teachers know the benefits of learner-centered lessons well. To this end, I understand you use the *Explanation Effect* in your classes. Could you elaborate on how you apply it?

David: Sure, the Explanation Effect is based on the principle that explaining to others what we have learned helps us learn more and consolidate our own learning, leading to better retention.

Additionally, something interesting happens when learners explain or teach others, as three stages of learning are activated. Before students teach, they focus on learning the subject matter themselves with greater attention. While teaching, they discover gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Finally, after teaching, feedback from others bolsters their knowledge and retention.

Interviewer: I see. So, how do you put it into practice?

David: Well, using a grammar lesson as an example, first, students in small groups are given a language focal point to master and subsequently explain and teach to the other group. For instance, some groups would explain the present simple tense and others the present continuous and progressive tense. Then, in their groups, they study the grammar explanation section in their coursebooks and discuss and create an explanation for their chosen tense. The teacher roving at the group level can monitor and field questions or provide students with clarification. Next, the different groups are amalgamated to explain and teach each other their respective language point.

This can later be extended by giving students a cloze/gap fill activity in which they insert the correct verb tenses into a paragraph. As they proceed, they can explain, cross-check, challenge, or justify their word choices to the other group, thereby strengthening their understanding.

Interviewer: Interesting, but how receptive are the students to this approach? Don't they think that explaining is the teacher's job?

David: Well, that might be a common expectation, but before they use the Explanation Effect for the first time, I show them the Learning Pyramid chart (Figure 1) and elicit the best way to learn, which happens to be 'by teaching others.' In the next lesson, a pre-selected student member is assigned to use the Explanation Effect to present the same chart again to the others. His/her student peers can see evidence of learning through explanations, which makes them trust the system. This lowers their reluctance to try it. Furthermore, group

participants often state they enjoy the process and explaining to others, as well as noticing that they retain more knowledge as a result.
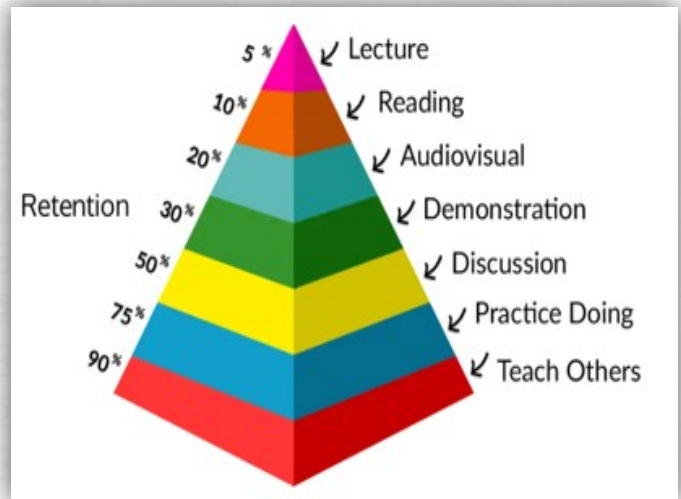

Figure 1: Learning Pyramid: Visual courtesy of Michael Simmons

Interviewer: I see. Do you notice any improvement in their learning outcomes?

David: Yes, it stands to reason that the students are more engaged and stimulated. They also have a clearer focus, so naturally, they learn more. Also, it strengthens the group dynamic and bond between classmates, so it often fosters more collaboration.

Jigsaw activity: Visual courtesy of www.Pixabay.com

LinkedIn: Not Just for networking

Susan Christine Saafan, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

LinkedIn is well-known as a business social media network, but there is an unexpected resource hiding in the upper-right-hand corner of the interface labeled as "Learning".

Office for Digital Learning and Online education: Visual courtesy of www.qu.edu.qa

Qatar University has an interesting alternative that is offered to teaching staff, who maybe, due to scheduling demands or the choice of professional development workshops on offer, cannot find an appropriate training opportunity aligned to their academic interests or needs on campus. There is a dedicated page on the university website to the Office for Digital Learning and Online Learning offering an array of diverse online training opportunities. Staff can view the options on offer on the Open Education Resources sub-page, and so this article will flash the spotlight on what the premium Linked In subscription, financed by Qatar University, has to offer.

Open Education Resources: Visual courtesy of www.qu.edu.qa

Any teaching staff member can set up and use their own Linked In account to access the Linked In suite of courses. Once the LinkedIn home page is opened, a user can click the work icon in the top right- hand corner and click the 'Learning' icon from the menu that appears and it will re-direct the user to LinkedIn Learning which then can be accessed on the professional business option using Qatar University sign-in credentials.

There is a wealth of courses to suit needs and goals such as instructional design, e-learning, and teaching live online classes on offer, as well as designing engaging courses for others, advancing a career as an educator, best practices, and theories of training and education with expert instructors using real-world examples. It is also particularly good for job-related apps like Blackboard, OneNote, MS Word, SPSS and Chat GPT training, or personal projects like Photo Shop. There is, however, a warning for the label: there are frequently new courses being added, any favorites might disappear without warning. A new feature added for the time-pressed teacher is AI-powered coaching which will help speed up searching for relevant courses and their application.
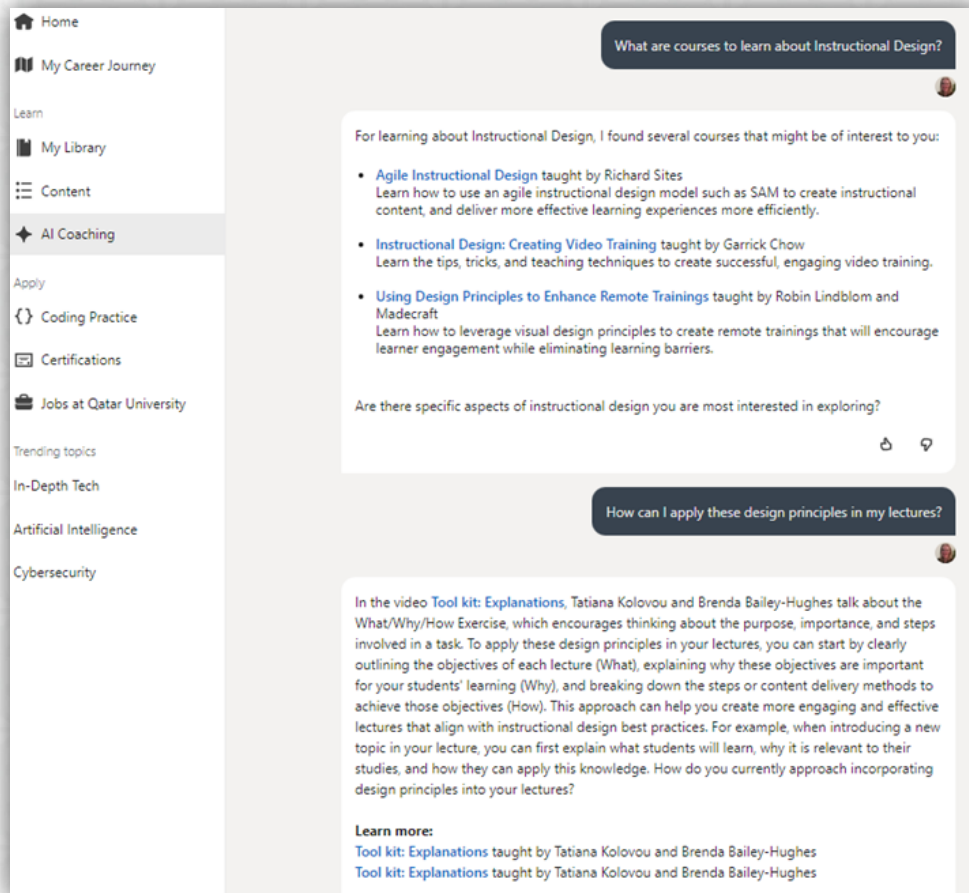
LinkedIn personal page: Visual courtesy of Susan Saafan

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