

ELT



Ireland bulletin

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Welcome to the fifth ELT Ireland Bulletin!

by Peter Lahiff (President of ELT Ireland)

I am very happy to welcome you to the fifth ELT Ireland Ireland Bulletin and my first one as president. I would like to use this as opportunity to reflect on how far we have come of that time. The picture below captures the moment when we the founding president of ELT Ireland, Dr. Lou McLaughlin, stepped down, having given five years to the role. The idea for the organisation was born out of conversations in the autumn of 2013 at the Digital ELT conference which the learning technologies special interest group of IATEFL ran in Dublin. The question asked was why there was no local organisation capable of organising such an event. That conversation led to a initial meeting held in January 2014.



Completely separately I had been trying to organise a professional development event to fill the gap left when ACELS stepped back from doing them. The suggestion was to have a TED-style event for ELT teaches which would become an online CPD resource. Lou invited me to join the founding committee as events coordinator, and in April of 2014 we ran our inaugural ELTed event in the teacher's club.

From the beginning we had to define what sort of organisation ELT Ireland would be and after some discussion we decided that we would follow the IATEFL model and dedicate ourselves to professional development. Although the majority of people interested in this sort of activity would be teachers, we were also determined to remain open to everyone with an interest in English language teaching and that we should not put an qualifying criteria on membership. As a result,

ELT Ireland is open to anyone with an interest in English language teaching.

It was established to develop English language teaching in Ireland by connecting the people who are working in the field so they could share experience and expertise. We set ourselves the mission of realising the mutual benefits that could be gained from members developing as individual professionals, as language teaching organisations and Ireland as an educational destination. We sought to do this by organising events where everyone involved can get together in a spirit of collaboration.

Over the last five years there has been a noticeable change in the atmosphere in Ireland and the importance of taking an increasingly professional and developmental approach to ELT. I would not claim that this is entirely down to ELT Ireland, but I believe that we have provided the ground where it could be visible and have been instrumental in encouraging people to reach outside their silos. To those who say our focus is too narrow, I would counter that it was only possible to achieve what we have by having a clearly defined and focused mission. There is still a lot to do, of course, but we have made a good start.

I want take this chance to pay a huge tribute to all of the voluntary committee members who have given freely of their time to ELT Ireland. Without all of their dedicated contributions, none of this would have been possible. I want to especially recognise the current committee of Ben Dobbs, Cathryn Bennett, Laura O'Grady, Joanne Mitten, and Jane Seely. I am only going to name the current committee, but my hat is off to everyone who has been involved to date whether on the committee or not. My hat is off to you.

Having been involved from the start, I didn't think it would so much of an additional challenge to take on the presidency. I have discovered that running an organisation is a big step up from running events and I have renewed respect for what Lou achieved in the role, while holding down a demanding day job. What I have been able to do since taking on the presidency over is because of the people working with me, and any hesitancy has been entirely my own.

I look forward to delivering the calendar of events we have have planned the the rest of your year and hope to see you at many of them. I want to invite you to contribute a talk, an article or some organisational help. It my seem a little daunting, but I promise it is very rewarding.

Farewell flowers: The committee says thanks to Lou at the 2018 annual conference.

Pic by Steve Bruce

Event Calendar: 2018 - 19

15 Joint LAMSIG	06 EAP in Ireland	17 ELTed Galway
10 #ELT Chinwag	08 #ELT Chinwag	12 #ELT Chinwag
SEPT	OCT	NOV
08 ELTed Dublin	16 Manager Meet-Up	16 Annual Conference
10 #ELT Chinwag	14 #ELT Chinwag	11 #ELT Chinwag
DEC	JAN	FEB
09 ELTed tba	17 Manager Meet-Up	25 Joint event tba
11 #ELT Chinwag	08 #ELT Chinwag	13 #ELT Chinwag
MAR	APR	MAY

What's on in ELT: From the Event page of the ELT Ireland website

Pic by ELT Ireland

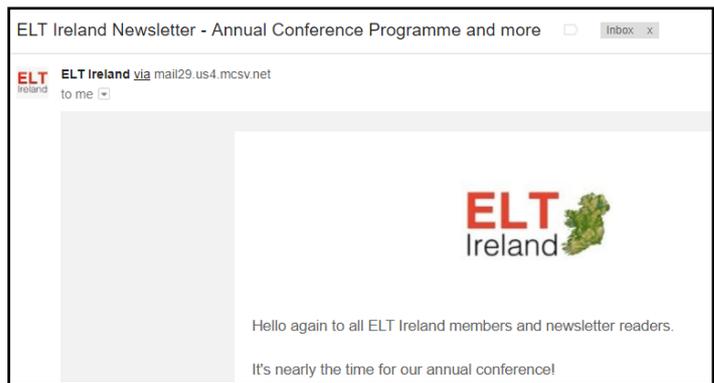
Keeping you up to date

by Ben Dobbs (Newsletter Editor)

ELT Ireland's regular newsletter is sent out to members and subscribers every other Monday at 8.00 am Irish time.

Our newsletter aims to share news from ELT Ireland and the wider sector including conferences and events in Ireland and abroad, calls for presenters, materials and links, requests for assistance with research, and updates on ELT Ireland's regular Twitter-based ELT Chinwag.

As we want more people to engage and to show more of what is going on with ELT members, we invite readers to send us anything that may be of interest to readers. We would love to share more of members' news, ideas, publications, conference appearances and research so, if you have something to share, please let us know.



Inbox info.: The ELT Ireland newsletter goes out every fortnight.

Pic by ELT Ireland

ELT Chinwag

by Jane Seely (Communications Officer)

When ELT Ireland was formed in January 2014 one of its key aims was to create and promote interaction and engagement between ELT professionals in Ireland, and to be a platform for the sharing of ideas.

Twitter has long been used as a PLN (personal learning network) by ELT professionals, and has served a hugely important role in developing and fostering the community of English language Teachers, in Ireland and abroad - this role matched perfectly with ELT Ireland's key aim. Since the first ELT Chinwag on Recycling Vocabulary, our topics have covered a wide range of themes from all aspects of ELT for teachers and managers alike, with discussions varying from Classroom Management to Assessment, from Activities for Young Learners to the Flipped Classroom. Each contributor brings their expertise to the table, with every session providing insightful, useful and above all practical tips and information for all involved. This year, ELT Ireland has opened up the monthly Chinwag to guest hosts, who chair a session on their subject of expertise. Recent sessions in this format have been held on the topics of Evidence Based Education, the B1 Plateau, and Special Education Needs in ELT, with the guest host providing a particular insight on their chosen area. By inviting speakers at ELTed events, and speakers at our Annual Conference to host Chinwag events, we hope to widen the scope of the information being shared to those unable to attend the conference, and encourage lively debate in the process.

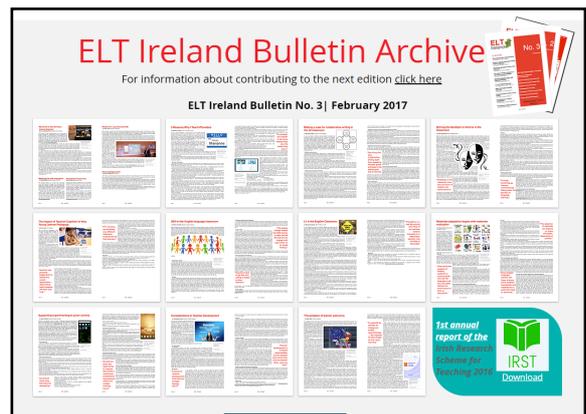
Letter from the Editor

by Laura O'Grady (Bulletin Editor)

2018 was such an exciting year for everyone at ELT Ireland with the publication of our fourth issue of the Bulletin. To recreate all that excitement! We kicked off the year in style with our Article Writing Forum hosted by Anna Malik and EC. This saw a gathering of ELT professionals ranging from teachers, teacher trainers to academic management all working together to share their knowledge and to inspire one another in the hopes of generating interesting and useful content.

Our Fifth issue doesn't disappoint! This issue sees us covering a broad range of topics from the use of controversial issues to trigger HOTS to CPD and critical reflection for practitioners. Our fifth issue would not be here without the contributions from our writers, the advice and support from our reviewers and the ELT Ireland team. I would like to thank our reviewers for their resolute commitment to the reviewing process.

To all the potential ELT writers I would like to say, being a writer allows you to reflect on your practices, allows you to sit still and think, it encourages you to develop your skills and to share your invaluable knowledge with others. So, if you are interested in contributing to our fifth issue contact us at info.eltireland@gmail.com. Many thanks to all!



Online Archive: Editions are added to the archive 6 months after publication

Pic by ELT Ireland

IATEFL Report Brighton 2018

by Cathryn Bennett (ELT Ireland Grant Holder 2018)

I feel quite fortunate to have had the opportunity to attend IATEFL thanks to ELT Ireland's travel grant. Although I have attended international teaching conferences over the past 10 years, none compare in size, expertise and excitement.

Talks for the EAP practitioner

One talk I attended was John Hughes' talk on 'Making critical thinking part of your everyday teacher toolkit'. Somewhat new to the EAP field, I found this talk very informative in the types of activities, and even the types of words teachers can use, to get learners to engage more critically with class materials. He began by presenting lower and higher orders of thinking and that course books typically jump from lower orders of thinking such as describing, to higher orders of thinking such as creating, often skipping the important middle level which would require learners to perform activities to analyse or evaluate. He went on the outline how instructions such "choose the best idea in your group", "work in groups and read the list of ideas. Which do you like and why?" and "work in pairs to plan a trip using the phrases from the listening" can activate critical thinking in learners. Attending this talk has informed my practice, as I imagine it has for most of the practitioners in the room.



Cathryn Bennett,
IATEFL 2018, Brighton

Pic by ELT Ireland

Having learned a great deal about critical analysis, I sought to attend a talk related to speaking activities for EAP learners. I found this in 'To debate or not to debate in an EAP classroom', a talk given by N. Mehvar Ergun Turkkan from Bilkent University. Her talk began by outlining the benefits of holding debates from an institutional, teacher and learner perspective. She explained she had often felt frustrated when planning class debates because of the need to micro-manage for success unlike her colleagues who were able to relax (and even enjoy) class debates. Her feelings mirrored my own and I was excited to learn how she structures her debates. As such she detailed three essentials for a debate: one, the need for a minimum of four teams (two to debate, two to observe/judge); two, allowing teams for research time on both sides of the debate; and three, the incorporation of specific roles per team like the 'refuter', 'opener/closer'. Her talk concluded with highlighting how debates inspire autonomy and boost learners' confidence in the language.

'Big names, Normal teachers'

For the 'veterans' in the field, you may remember those first few years of your practice when you spent hours reading about learner motivation, grammar usage, and how to teach English as a second language. You thought 'I'd love to meet and talk with this teacher in more depth', though perhaps never imagining the chance would arrive. Then you hear about IATEFL. Walking the halls of the conference centre, I passed 'big names' from my MA TESOL who greeted me warmly. It is then that you realise these 'big names' are still just teachers with the same goal as you at IATEFL: they learn about what other practitioners do and to better inform our practice. The most memorable moment was watching a nervous presenter give a charismatic presentation about project based learning in Malaysia and see Scott Thornbury in the audience. Afterward, he met, congratulated and took photos with the presenter who called him 'his mentor'. These ELT 'MVPs' are personable and encouraging of the industry's new practitioners. Next year, I hope to have the courage to ask my teaching idols about their practice, get their thoughts about my research (and possibly get a photo). ELT Ireland has helped to make this possible.

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