

Presenters' Profiles:



Scott Thornbury

Bio

Scott Thornbury has taught and trained in Egypt, UK, Spain, and in his native New Zealand. He currently teaches on an online MA TESOL program for The New School in New York. His writing credits include several award-winning books for teachers on language and methodology. He is also the series editor for the Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers, and a trustee of the HandsUp Project, which promotes drama activities in English for children in under-resourced regions of the Arab world. His website is www.scottthornbury.com

Title

Unpacking a Text

Summary

Texts - especially authentic texts – are treated somewhat superficially, on the principle that ‘you don’t have to understand every word’. Yet each word in a text opens a little window into the language. In this talk, I show how texts can be exploited for their (often hidden) linguistic and textual features. To do this, think of a text like a package, with different things inside that need to be ‘unpacked’. Or like an onion – and that exploiting a text means peeling off each layer of the onion successively.



Chris Stryker

Bio

Chris Stryker is a master teacher and an expert in educational technologies and methodologies. A veteran of 30-years in education, he has spent the last decade teaching, administrating and mentoring faculty and students in GCC universities. He is a graduate of Teachers College • Columbia University.

Title

Best-Practice Approaches for Teaching Online While Preserving Mental Health

Summary

As most educators around the world are now well aware, years of successful classroom teaching experience don't necessarily guarantee that one can easily switch to teaching classes online. Indeed, teaching online requires some new (and often unanticipated) skills. Despite the many challenges, stresses and mixed feelings created by our recent jump to remote education, with adequate advance preparation and some key advice, online teaching and learning can actually enable faculty and students to transcend many of the problems that can characterize "traditional" educational experiences and may even herald the dawn of a new era for education worldwide.

This session will provide an overview of best-practice pedagogies and proven real-world strategies for planning and conducting successful online learning experiences while preserving (and promoting) the mental health and overall wellbeing of everyone involved.



Aaron Balick

Bio

Aaron Balick, PhD is a psychotherapist, cultural theorist, and author applying ideas from depth psychology to culture and technology. He is an honorary senior lecturer at the Department for Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies at the University of Essex (UK). His books include *The Psychodynamics of Social Networking: connected-up instantaneous culture and the self* and the children’s self-help book *Keep Your Cool: how to deal with life’s worries and stress* and, *The Little Book of Calm: tame your anxieties, face your fears, and live free*. Aaron is the director of Stillpoint Spaces, an international psychology, co-working, therapy, and events hub. He is based in London.

Title

Staying Grounded in Difficult Times: a psychologically intelligent guide to keeping calm.

Summary

Times are unusually stressful and now more than ever we need to apply the necessary life skills to ensure that we are balanced and grounded, so we’re better able to meet today’s challenges. Drawing on clinical psychology, emotional intelligence, and mindfulness, Dr. Balick will suggest simple practices that can see you through this time with more equanimity and calm to better enable you to support yourself and those around you.



Naima Sarfraz

Bio

Naima Sarfraz has been involved in English language teaching for over 10 years. She is currently a Course Lead for Writing Workshop and an English lecturer in QU's Foundation Program. She also chairs of the Academic Excellence and Professional Development Committee for the department. She is interested in how students learn and the cognitive processes involved in second-language acquisition.

Title

Making the Most of Online Teaching

Summary

With the rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic across the globe, educators are faced with various professional and instructional challenges. However, it has also created new opportunities for progress and development. The presenter will share what works and what does not when we teach courses remotely, and how to use this opportunity to retool and revamp our teaching practices.



Madhubala Bava Harji

Bio

Professor Madhubala has served at Multimedia University for more than 20 years holding various senior management and administrative positions. As a panel member of the Malaysian Qualification Agency, she reviews Diploma, Bachelor's, Master's and PhD English, and Education and TESL programs of other institutions for the Ministry of Education. She is highly competent in curriculum design at all levels and she has vast experience teaching all levels and has been awarded the Gold Medal Award for Teaching and The British High Commissioner's Award.

Title

Perceived Levels of Critical Thinking Competence and Preference of Learning Platforms

Summary

Institutions adopt blended learning to bridge regular face-to-face and online learning to meet educational goals. This hybrid method allows for self-paced and independent learning where students will be required to be more discerning and critical. They will need to interpret, analyze, evaluate, explain, infer and self-regulate information. The findings of a quantitative study that examined perceived levels of critical thinking competence, where the blended learning approach, with a 70-30 composition mix of face-to-face and online learning respectively is adopted in the delivery of all courses will be presented in this session.



Judy Thompson

Bio

Judy Thompson is an internationally recognized TEDx speaker, author and teacher. With a BA in English, TESL Certification and as a CLB Assessor Judy develops and delivers ground-breaking courses for students and teachers. English is Stupid, Students are Not was the first of her seven publications and her system for teaching Speaking is incorporated in English curricula in more than 60 countries. Ms Thompson believes languages are more the same than different. Harvesting similarities helps learners speak English faster and more confidently. The need to express ourselves and be understood are desires that unite us all.

Title

Where Arabic and English Intersect

Summary

Arabic and English, what sounds are the same? What roles does stress play? What cultural norms contribute to conversation? This interactive presentation identifies key similarities between Arabic and English to help learners master English confidently using the simple, proven system found in English is Stupid, Students are Not.



Alaeddin Halwani

Bio

Alaeddin Halwani is a lecturer in the Foundation Program, Department of English. He has a Master's degree in ELT from Leeds University in Britain. Alaeddin has given many workshops and training sessions, both face-to-face and online, locally, regionally and internationally on the use of technology in language teaching and learning.

Title

Five Digital Classroom Tools for Innovative Teachers

Summary

This workshop is about creating digital exercises in the English classroom. Teachers can create free games, quizzes, activities and diagrams in seconds and can host them on Blackboard, or their websites. No signups or passwords are required. While three of the digital exercise focus on how to turn vocabulary exercises into appealing pieces of multimedia, the remaining two focus on using digital exercises as an effective strategy for reading comprehension.



Zohreh R. Eslami

Bio	<p>Zohreh R. Eslami is a Professor at Texas A&M University and She has published more than 100 journal articles in journals such as <i>Intercultural pragmatics, System, ELT Journal, Modern Language Journal, System, Journal of Pragmatics, Journal of Asian Pacific Communication, and Bilingual Education Journal</i>. Her research interests include discourse analysis, Instructional and intercultural pragmatics, cyber -pragmatics, linguistic politeness, L2 literacy development, L2 literacy in content areas, and task-based language teaching and technology. She serves as the managing and co-editor of Applied Pragmatics Journal(John Benjamins). Affiliation: Texas A&M University and Texas A&M University at Qatar</p>
Title	<p>Intercultural communication: Teaching and Learning Pragmatics Using Movies</p>
Summary	<p>Cross-cultural face-to-face interactional competence is increasingly critical in an era of pluralistic workplaces, educational settings, and neighborhoods. Cultural diversity—deriving from ethnic and racial differences, international business and diplomacy, and immigration--carries the pervasive risk of prejudice, stereotyping and alienation. This presentation draws from spontaneous data from movies on cross-cultural (mis)communication deriving from family, social, educational, and workplace discourse containing pragmatic misfires. The data that I will share asks us to take a critical look at the concepts of Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP) and Cross-cultural Pragmatics (CCP), comparing and contrasting their usefulness in a world increasingly characterized by transnationalism and globalization.</p>



Sedigh Mohammadi

Bio

Sid Mohammadi is an English language instructor at the Community College of Qatar. He graduated with distinction from the University of Southampton after receiving a Professor Jack C. Richards scholarship to pursue an MA in English Language Teaching. He has taught at universities in the United Kingdom, Turkey, Iran, and Qatar. Recently, he has been involved in teacher training and curriculum development.

Title

Principles for Designing Blended Language Courses

Summary

This presentation will examine some of the benefits and drawbacks of Blended Language Learning. Additionally, it will focus on six essential principles of designing a Blended Language Learning programs. These have been established through Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research, second language pedagogy and educational technology. This session will emphasize the importance of approaching technology with a pedagogy-led mindset rather than technology-led.



Enita Elecia Barrett

Bio

Dr. Enita Elecia Barrett is a lecturer at QU FPDE and the Special Needs Committee Lead at the QU Foundation Program. She holds a doctorate in Education- Education Leadership –TESOL/Special Education. She also holds two Master Degrees, - one (M. Ed) in Instructional leadership, and the other, Master of Education (M. Ed) in Secondary Education Advanced Studies in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages –TESOL , all from the University of North Florida, Jacksonville, Fl. USA. Her current research interest is special education in academic environments, especially in tertiary institution.

Title

Cognitive Disabilities in Education: How the brain works

Summary

Students with unseen disabilities are among the most misunderstood of our student populations. This session aims to highlight the biological make-up of the brain so that attendees can better understand the causes of various forms of learning disabilities (LD) that are represented in our FP classroom. It is hoped that demystifying the science will boost faculty confidence and self-efficacy as it pertains to engaging Students with differentiated abilities.



Pamela Johnson

Bio

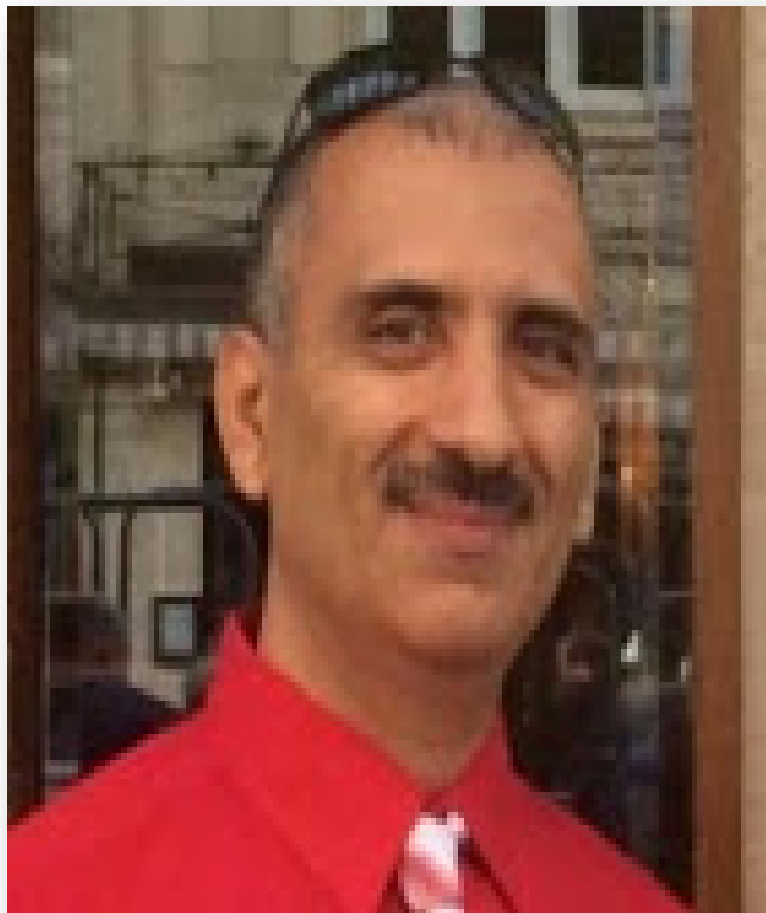
Pamela Johnson is Pearson's ELT trainer and consultant with 10 years of experience in higher education in the UAE. She has developed and delivered faculty professional development that focuses on supporting educators as they strive to create a dynamic, effective learning experience for their students. She is a former Apple Education Trainer and Google Certified Trainer, and she has an MS Ed in TESOL from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, USA.

Title

Creating a 21st Century Skills Learning Experience

Summary

For several years now, many educators have considered 21st century skills essential to students' success in academic and professional life. However, for many institutions, these skills have not been fully integrated into curriculum and assessments. This presentation discusses the obstacles to integrating 21st century skills into a course and how to overcome those obstacles.



Ryad A Ghanam

Bio

Dr Ghanam is a Professor of mathematics at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar. His area of expertise is applied differential geometry, Lie groups and Lie algebras.

Title

Math Games: Fun Fridays

Summary

In this session, the speaker will present some of the math games that he has integrated in his classes. These games are based on topics that are taught in math classes such as: Algebra, Linear Algebra, Abstract Algebra and Combinatorics.



Houssein Ayoub

Bio

Dr. Houssein Ayoub is an Assistant Professor of Mathematics in the Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Physics at Qatar University (QU). His main research interests are in the areas of mathematical modeling, nonlinear dynamic system, differential equations, and scientific computing. Specifically, he has been involved in applying mathematical and computational methods to processes that emerges from life sciences such as population dynamics, cellular systems, diseases, viruses, and epidemics.

Title

Age could be driving variable COVID-19 epidemic trajectories worldwide: Mathematical modeling analyses.

Summary

In this talk, he will present some findings of the COVID-19 research. An age-stratified deterministic mathematical model that describes COVID-19 transmission dynamics was applied to 159 countries. Assuming worst-case scenario for the pandemic, the results indicate that there could be stark regional differences in epidemic trajectories driven by differences in the distribution of the population by age.



Diana Reyos - Malabanan

Bio

Dr. Diana Reyos – Malabanan is a Lecturer of Mathematics at Foundation Program, Department of Mathematics at Qatar University (QU). Her area of expertise is in graph theory and interests lie but not limited to e-learning, data science, students advising and development.

Title

Teaching Math Beyond the Facts

Summary

The sudden change to online teaching imposed by the corona virus pandemic is a good opportunity to improve our approach to teaching. This presentation will illustrate metacognitive approach in teaching mathematics, and how it can be of benefit to educators to enrich optimal students' engagement. It also helps to provide an opportunity to improve teaching and assessing students' learning in an online setting.