Eric Baber

Biodata

Eric Baber is Account Support Director for Cambridge University Press (ELT). In this role he is responsible for ensuring customers of our digital products receive the post-sales support they need in order to maximise the learning outcomes of their students. This covers teacher training, technical implementation, gathering feedback in order to improve our offerings further, and more. Eric is also currently President of IATEFL, the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language. IATEFL currently has 4000 members from around the world, 100 associated teachers’ organisations, and holds an annual conference which attracts nearly 2,300 delegates face-to-face and around 50,000 participants online. He is passionate about all things technology-and-education related, in particular exploring new technologies and how they can be put to best use for teaching and learning. He has published a number of books and articles in this area and continues to engage in relevant research.

Abstract

The mobile phone: a teacher's friend or a teacher's enemy?

When we were kids we used to pass messages to each other under the desk on slips of paper. Learners nowadays still pass messages to each other under the desk, but the means of communication have changed from slips of paper to SMS messages, IM and e-mail, all done via their mobile phones. So are mobile phones the enemy of the teacher? In my session I will argue that this isn’t the case.

Instead of forbidding students from using their mobile phones in the classroom we can encourage them to use their devices for meaningful activities. In this talk I will demonstrate some mobile apps and mobile-optimised online content which was either specifically designed for learners of English or which can be exploited for learning and teaching. We will also look at activities a teacher can set students both in the classroom and as homework to ensure students use their mobile phones for more than just arranging their next night out and “whispering” behind the teacher’s back!