

Practical Uses of Technology in the EFL Classroom **An Update – where should we be and why aren't we there yet?**

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With the incredible amount of free material, new teaching techniques and learning opportunities technology can now provide us, what's stopping teachers from using it?

The first part of this session aims to bring you up to date with a range of applications that are now possible with technology in the EFL classroom. We will start by looking at the latest developments on the Internet, demonstrating lesson ideas and showing how the abundance of authentic audio and video available nowadays can be exploited for learners. The session will go on to discuss how free software such as Audacity, Teacher's Pet, and Skype can provide learners with a more authentic communicative language learning experience, helping with the full range of language skills and systems. Examples of how blogs and wikis can be put to good use will also be shown, along with a look at how the use of PowerPoint with a projector or IWB can create a wealth of new games and activities.

The second part of the session will then look at some of the barriers preventing teachers from making the most of these new technologies. A lack of training, unreliable equipment, low confidence, high costs and poor configuration can all create barriers for teachers when at the same time technology is trying to remove barriers to learning. Practical ideas and strategies will be discussed to help overcome these obstacles to encourage and empower your teachers to improve their ability to use technology.

Richard Turnbull, BA (Hons), DELTA is an EFL teacher and teacher trainer based on the south coast of the UK. He is the founder of TEFLTech, a training consultancy that specialises in advancing the use of technology in the EFL classroom. He runs hands-on workshops and training courses for EFL teachers and schools, which focus on helping build practical skills as well as confidence when using technology. In addition, he consults on IT strategy for language schools, advising on hardware and software as well as installing and configuring IT systems. For more information, please see www.tefltech.com.