

# APALA

NUMBER 7

Alicia Coe  
Carmen Moreno  
Joan Triay  
Kieran Donaghy  
Lucrecia Rallo  
Stephen Pilton  
Virginia Giménez  
Yolanda Joy Calvo

AND MUCH MORE

ARTICLES  
ON ELT  
RECOMMENDED  
BOOKS' REVIEWS  
CLASSROOM  
EXPERIENCES

# BAL

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ENGAGE  
YOUR  
**EFL**  
**STUDENTS**  
WITH  
DIGITAL  
CONTENT

By Lucrecia Rallo  
*Universitat de les  
Illes Balears*

Lucrecia Rallo Fabra is a senior lecturer at the Department of Spanish, Modern and Classic Philologies of the University of the Balearic Islands, where she teaches English Language and Phonology. She obtained her Bachelor's Degree in English Philology from the University of Barcelona in 1993. She also holds a Master's degree in Logopedics from the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya and a PhD in Linguistics from the University of Barcelona. She has developed her academic career at various higher education institutions, including the University of Barcelona, Universitat Ramon Llull and Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Her research interests include L2 speech learning and pronunciation teaching. She has been appointed Visiting Fellow at various international universities such as the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the University of Oregon and the University of Western Sydney.

No one can deny that the internet has changed the world. Right now we cannot conceive of our lives without smart phones; tablets have replaced TV for our children; and long-distance communication is no longer a barrier thanks to Skype or Messenger. However, is the internet also changing the way we teach and learn? My twelve-year experience of training Primary English teachers at the UIB is that most state schools have not really opted for novel, innovative EFL teaching methods grounded on the use of the ICTs (information and communication technologies). The reasons are multiple, starting from lack of funding to provide the schools with appropriate mobile devices; the practitioners' lack of ICT skills; and, most importantly, school curriculums that rely excessively on textbooks as the only basis for successful learning, thereby ignoring the potential of mobile devices to

expose learners to authentic audiovisual input. The result is that the optimal development of students' English oral skills is hindered.

The resources I present here are the result of an Erasmus + Project in which I have recently been involved: COLISSEE. The intellectual outputs of COLISSEE were published in an open source format as a Guide of Good Practices . The Guide includes a series of apps and resources that can be used by teachers to create digital content and learning environments, as well as some examples created by the project partners. In this article I will present a hands-on selection of these tools , which I think can be useful to teachers wishing to jump into the exciting world of the 2.0 learner.

# 1

## Break the ice with Emoji Translator

This is an engaging activity to start your class and is suitable for all levels. Emoji translator turns words into emoticons. A simple pair-work activity that you can do in class consists of asking your students to type a few sentences that describe themselves (family, personality, hobbies, etc.); the student shows the emoji translation to their partner, who has to guess the content. Give it a try if you want to know a bit more about me!

• 👤👉👈 = Lucrecia. 🧑👦👧👦, 1👦👧, 2👦👧. I👉❤️👈👤

A PDF version of the guide can be downloaded at <https://old.liu.se/colisee/project-documentation?l=en>

All the selected tools are free or have a trial license for educational use.

• I teach 🍌  
• 👤👉 students = at 🏫👩🎓  
• In 🇧🇪 I 🍌👉 + I 🍌👉 to visit 👤👉👈 | 🍌👉👈 to 🇨🇪🇩🇪🇬🇺🇰🇯🇪

<http://emojitranslate.com/>

# 2

## Voki: Avatars that move and talk

Allow your students to create virtual characters that speak real English. This is an enjoyable way to expose learners to authentic English and have fun. The following example was created by my colleague Jordi Badenes for his ESP (English for specific purposes) course in Health and Behavioural Sciences:



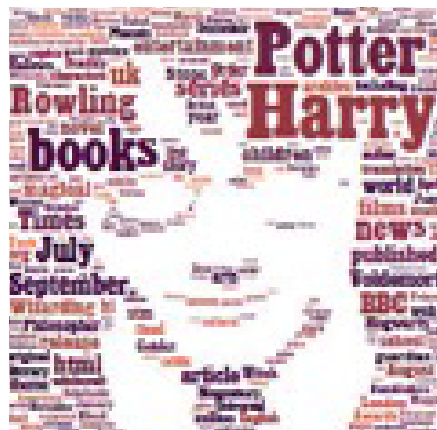
<http://tinyurl.com/zcmfvpw>

# 3

## Word clouds to learn vocabulary: Wordle and Tagxedo

Forcing students to learn vocabulary can be an arduous task but turning words into beautiful shapes can be a fun challenge. Word clouds are created from a simple list of words or a written text. Just give free rein to your imagination!

<http://www.tagxedo.com/>



# 4

## Create your own video-tutorials with Screencast-O-Matic:

Record yourself with voice/video while your computer screen is in 'capture' mode. This is a good way to practice listening and speaking skills, especially for those students that need to be pushed because they are too shy to talk in class. As a listening activity, the teacher



## 5 Turn videos into listening exercises with PlayPosit (EduCanon)

YouTube and Vimeo offer EFL teachers a wide range of audio-visual materials for all levels. But how can we edit these videos in order to use them as listening comprehension activities? It is very simple. PlayPosit allows you to keep your students actively engaged. As the video progresses, multiple choice/open questions pop up on the screen and help the teacher monitor students' levels of attention and comprehension.

[www.playposit.com/](http://www.playposit.com/)

## 7 Other useful resources

Two ways to receive up-dates of ICT resources for language teaching is through Google Groups. For those interested in free on-line resources, lesson sharing and teaching tips, Google Communities such as Free ELT resources are good options. I also recommend Evangelia Karagianni's site, a former primary English teacher and teacher trainer. Another option is opening a Scoop-It account. All you need to do is enter the names of the topics that you want to receive updates about and select the frequency of the e-mail alerts. Scoop-It works as a 'curator' selecting the content that might be of interest to you. Enjoy!

## 6 Digital Board: Padlet

Padlet is a digital board on which both teacher and students can create content. The tool can upload of all kinds of file format, including web links, videos, sound, presentations, images and PDF docs. From the student's perspective, it is a very easy and intuitive way to carry out brainstorming before writing an essay, among other things. From the teacher's perspective, it helps to have all the content of a given topic/unit organized in one place as a resource. The example below corresponds to a padlet I created for my Phonetics & Phonology course in English Studies.

[padlet.com/my/ashboard](http://padlet.com/my/ashboard)

