

Presenter: John Mark King

Format: Workshop

Time: 60-90 minutes

Title: "A Postmethod Pedagogy: Challenges, Opportunities and Empowerment"

Target Students: Beginner to advanced, any age group

Equipment Needed: laptop and multimedia projector

Summary

In this workshop, teachers will explore the nature of the *Postmethod Condition* as it relates to their unique teaching situation. Then, participants will develop classroom strategies that best suit:

1) their unique teaching environment, 2) their own skills and experience and 3) the needs and expectations of their students.

Abstract

With the ever-widening variety of topics and areas of research in the field of TESOL, one recurring theme is that of the greater importance given to the role played by the language teaching context over specific classroom methods. Thus, there is more discussion of the local political, social and cultural aspects of language teaching than, for example, whether or not The Silent Way is or is not an effective teaching practice.

What does this mean for the EFL teacher? The *Postmethod Condition* posits that the modern teacher, now working in a professional environment which has long since cast off its devotion to uncovering and espousing the "perfect method," must now be equipped to evaluate her own teaching environment and modify her classroom approach accordingly. This means the development of a series of teacher-selected microstrategies (classroom activities) based on a series of universal macrostrategies (general classroom/learning goals). For example, while a macrostrategy may be to encourage students to engage in meaningful interaction in English in the classroom, the corresponding microstrategy could be a small group task designed and implemented by the teacher which encourages students to do this.

Such microstrategies should take into account and complement: 1) the unique teaching environment, 2) the teacher's own skills and experience and 3) the needs and expectations of the students. Indeed, a *Postmethod Pedagogy* may empower teachers and provide greater emphasis on the specific learning environment, but it also places an enormous amount of pressure and responsibility on teachers who may or may not have the confidence or skills required for such an undertaking.

In this workshop, participants will first explore the *Postmethod Condition*, how it came about and what it means to them. Then, using their own teaching context as a starting point, participants will identify those aspects of a *Postmethod Pedagogy* which they find most relevant and begin to create a contextual framework upon which they can attach a series of their own teaching strategies which are best suited to their students.