



APPI & British Council Seminar

Creative Reading: BritLit 10 Years on

19 October 2013

09.45 - 18.00

TRYP Coimbra Hotel

SEBENTA



José de Almeida Gomes & Filhos, Lda.

Seminar bookshop at the hotel lobby: José de Almeida Gomes & Filhos, Lda. Discount prices.

A lot can happen in ten years. A lot *has* happened in ten years, and it would have been impossible to predict the course of events when we started the BritLit project in 2003. I say 'we' advisedly as, from the beginning, BritLit was a joint project by APPI and the British Council and would not have gone beyond an idea idly sketched over a cup of coffee if it hadn't been for the enthusiastic involvement of hundreds of teachers of English in Portuguese schools.

It started life by responding to a need from teachers of English, mainly faced with the year 10 'extensive reading' demand on the syllabus. What was on offer at the time was little more than some rather dry suggestions for teaching Literature, and guidance on how the student engagement (I avoid the word 'reading') with some dusty tomes might be tested. It was little wonder that many teachers were tearing their hair out in frustration.

At first, we simply sought to develop a fresh approach to the standard items in the suggested reading list. This led to the beginning of a methodology which has been developed and refined over the years, but which, in essence, saw the value of exploring the potential for creativity in the reader rather than treating the student as a merely passive recipient for other people's words. Essential to this process was the emergence of a series of pre-reading activities, which relied on students developing their own ideas about the tale - based on clues and hints from a wide range of sources - before they read it. This approach - which assumes that the 'reader' is an active participant in the process of reading - led to new ways of interacting with the actual text and in a broad brush approach to follow-up work which could be easily linked to other issues being explored in the syllabus.

Having established a *modus operandi*, the project then started to explore new sources of texts to use beyond the recommended Ministry list and one of the ground rules that eventually emerged was that the authors of these new texts should be living. This led directly to the emergence of a project within the project: 'Meet the Author'. Authors and poets visited schools, working with teachers and students, and worked with the project organisers to create new 'kits' of teaching resources. Their involvement brought a whole new dynamism to the project which lasts until today.

Today - ten years on - the project has been explored across every continent in the world using the British Council *Teaching English* website, and materials have been contributed by teachers from many countries other than Portugal. Millions of children worldwide have now benefitted from what started off as a modest project in Portugal and has since become a global phenomenon.

There is a lot to celebrate.

Fitch O'Connell

Porto

Programme	ROOM A (160 seats)	
09.45 - 10.00	Opening session	
10.00 - 11.00	Opening plenary - FITCH O’CONNELL ‘BritLit: 10 years in the making’	
11.00 - 11.30	Coffee break - Hotel lobby *	
11.30 - 12.30	Round table session - LEVI TAFARI, RON BUTLIN and FITCH O’CONNELL	
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch	
	ROOM A (100 seats)	ROOM B (60 seats)
14.00 - 15.00	DAVID PETRIE – ‘The Reading Teacher’ - Talk	ALEXANDRA DUARTE - ‘Spice up Reading with Digital Tools’ - Talk
15.10 - 16.10	FILOMENA MARTINS – ‘Short storying in class...’ - Workshop	CELESTE SIMÕES and HELENA OLIVEIRA - ‘Lit Sync Time!’ - Workshop
16.10 - 16.40	Coffee break – Hotel lobby	
16.40 - 17.25	LEVI TAFARI - ‘Creative writing’	RON BUTLIN - ‘Creative writing’
17.30 - 18.00	Closing session	

* Book Launch:

“Rice & Chips” is Fitch O’Connell’s second book of short stories, all glimpses of life in Portugal as seen through the eyes of an immigrant! The book launch will take place during the morning coffee break. Copies will be on sale (€7.50) during the seminar at the reception desk.

“Fifteen trips into deepest Portugal, all involving food! Why did the car start to blow bubbles? Why did so many Castles explode?

Why do umbrellas need to be different colours? How do you prevent your goat from becoming desiccated? The answer to these, and many more questions that you didn't even know you needed answers to, are to be found here, along with recipes for meals you didn't know you wanted to eat until you read about them.”

ABSTRACTS

Opening Plenary ‘BritLit: 10 Years in the making’ Fitch O’Connell	A summary of the BritLit achievements and the methodology and philosophy which underpin it, together with a consideration of what the future might bring.
Round Table session Levi Tafari, Ron Butlin and Fitch O’Connell	Levi Tafari and Ron Butlin will join Fitch O’Connell in a ‘round table’ discussion, and delegates will be invited to direct questions of their own to the panel. Come prepared!
‘The Reading Teacher’ David Petrie	This talk looks at the structure and purpose of a typical reading lesson, gives a brief overview of the main approaches to developing the reading skill and finally provides some practical ideas to promote specific sub-skills, such as skimming or inferring meaning.
‘Spice up Reading with Digital Tools’ Alexandra Duarte	Our students don’t read regularly - much less literature! How about introducing them to Contemporary British Literature and exploring texts with digital tools? In this session, we are sharing some activities and resources to spice up reading, enlarge vocabulary and promote cultural studies as well as literary awareness.
‘Short storying in class...’ Filomena Martins	On taking a short story from the BritLit kit, I intend to present some strategies with the help of materials already prepared online to work with students in class.
‘Lit Sync Time!’ Celeste Simões and Helena Oliveira	Stories and poems have always been a part of us, a part of our lessons. They are excellent ways of sharing knowledge with our students and bringing lessons to life. In this session we’ll be looking at wonderful texts which will brighten our lessons and motivate our students.
‘Creative Writing’ Levi Tafari and Ron Butlin	Our writers both have considerable experience in passing on ideas for creative writing in prose and poetry and in these sessions they will be working with you to produce something new, using techniques which can be transferred to the language classroom.

SPEAKERS' BIODATA

ALEXANDRA DUARTE AE Esc. Martinho Árias, Soure	Alexandra Duarte is from Coimbra and has long been interested in ed tech tools and reading, with many activities and resources available in her blog at http://www.clubeinglesoure.blogspot.pt
CELESTE SIMÕES AE Carregal do Sal/APPI	Celeste Simões has a degree in English and German and a Post-graduate course in Translation Studies by the University of Coimbra. She is preparing the defence of her doctoral thesis on Translation Studies. She is a course book author (<i>Bridges 10</i> , <i>Sebenta/Leya</i>) and has written several articles for The APPI Journal and Newsletter.
DAVID PETRIE International House Coimbra/APPI	I've been teaching English since 2002 and worked in China and Poland before coming to Portugal in 2006. Along the way I did my DELTA and a MA Applied Linguistics & TESOL. When I have time, I blog on ELT matters at www.teflgeek.net .
FILOMENA MARTINS ES Gago Coutinho, Alverca/APPI	Teacher trainer for Universidade de Lisboa for 18 years; teacher trainer for APPI; article writer for APPI Journal; presenter for APPI; Pedagogical Coordinator of English classroom text books for Texto Editora; post-graduation in American Studies; post-graduation in E-Teaching; secondary school teacher.
FITCH O'CONNELL	Fitch O'Connell has been involved in education, teaching and literature for many years. He started the BritLit project, along with other colleagues from the British Council and from APPI, ten years ago this year, and considers it one of the most successful enterprises he has been professionally involved in. He now spends most of his time writing, together with some teacher training, and in renovating a house in the country.
HELENA OLIVEIRA Colégio Moderno, Lisboa/APPI	Helena has a degree in English and German (FLUC), and a Masters degree in English Didactics (FCSH-UNL). She is a course book author (<i>Bridges</i> , <i>Sebenta/Leya</i>) and has written several articles on methodology for The APPI Journal and Newsletter.
LEVI TAFARI	Levi Tafari is arguably one of the leading exponents of a hybrid form of poetry containing elements of both mainstream English and Black cultural references. Indeed, while his self-described 'urban griot' approach has much in common with the African-inspired oral tradition found in the work of storytellers such as Jan Blake, he is often paired alongside Benjamin Zephaniah, with whom he has been friends since the early 1980s. According to Mike Storry, Tafari has 'raised the profile of Rastafarianism and promoted the interests of ethnic minority groups' (British Cultural Identities). That said, he is equally influenced by the Merseyside poets of his native Liverpool – British 'beats' such as Adrian Henry, Roger McGough and Brian Patten, whose work was published in The Mersey Sound. http://literature.britishcouncil.org/levi-tafari#genres
RON BUTLIN	With an international reputation as a prize-winning novelist, Ron Butlin is also the Edinburgh Makar (poet laureate). In 2009 he was made the first ever Honorary Writing fellow (together with Ian Rankin) at Edinburgh University. Much of his poetry, as well as many of his novels and short stories have been broadcast and translated into over ten languages. In addition to his plays for BBC radio and theatre (most recently <i>Sweet Dreams</i> for Oran Mor in Glasgow), he has written five operas, two of them for Scottish Opera. http://www.ronbutlin.co.uk/

