

EDITORIAL

A BOOK IS BORN Said Berdouz

Last September, the present school year was hoped to bring about a lot of good expectations for teachers, school administrators, pupils and parents as well. All of them were prepared and highly motivated to carry out respectively their duties so as to help in the implementation of the current educational reform decided by national policy makers, with the aim of upgrading and improving our educational system. However, even if all seemed to go on well, some mishaps could not go by unnoticed. We are looking forward to improving our learners' abilities to acquire the knowledge and the tools which will help them be independent learners in the future. I wonder how could this occur with overcrowded classes, though I know that it is not impossible. I also wonder how could this be achieved in under-furnished classrooms where pupils spend a precious amount of time fetching chairs or tables from other classrooms. Do we really seek the amelioration of our educational system when information and communication technology is still at its rudimentary stages in most of our schools though we are in the third millennium? Are we really after enhancing teachers' self-development when, very often, teachers are refused access to school facilities such as the internet? Are we really willing to foster and set in the sought after positive change in our schooling system when we fail to commit ourselves to our engagements or fail to live up to the basic elements of democracy, as it has been the case in the textbooks business?

To all these and to other questions of the same, I would answer yes, provided some conditions are met. First of all, we must accept as true that education is and should be everybody's concern; it is the concern of policy makers, of educational authorities as it is the concern of any scrupulous citizen. Second, we must consider that any faux-pas in plans concerning our education will, with no doubt, put the future of our nation at stake; whence there is no room for further mistakes. Third, we should pay more tribute, the least we can do, to those who are in charge of education in our country because they deserve it and they are the best investment we can do in this field. Fourth, these people must know that they are accountable for the success of the educational enterprise to the whole nation and for the successful coming-through to the ongoing educational reform which, apparently, aims at the democratisation of our schooling. They all should work accordingly, bearing in mind that education is a collaborative work, a kind of an assembly line work where the kindergarten teacher's contribution is as important as that of a university teacher. Consequently, all the participants in the building up of the edifice of

education should cooperate with one another, listen to one another and be in the know of what the other is doing.

A few months ago, the whole community of Moroccan TEFL practitioners, teachers and supervisors alike, found themselves faced with the problem of the unavailability of the prescribed textbook, Highway, to be used with the "Tronc Commun" classes. However, they did not fail to their commitment and proved to be men for all seasons. The book in question was selected among the ones in use with the approval of the Ministry of Education (recently named "The Ministry of Education and Youth") and was agreed upon at the end of the previous school year; yet, its publication knew some delay for some rational reason.

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**Edited by:
Mohammed Hassim and Said Berdouz**

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(editorial continued)

Meanwhile a group of speedy merchants, whose good will and whose concern with the welfare of EFL in Morocco cannot be put to question, provided the book market with a well done workbook, an accelerating version of the famous “Highway” and took advantage of the circumstances; some would say, for not only in remote places of the country but in cities as well, Accelerating Highway was sold/ bought on the basis that it was the official course book for the “Tronc Commun” classes during September, October and most of November.

The situation was so confusing that concerned parents and teachers felt at loss; parents because they thought that their children might not be doing the right thing in English in the absence of the official schoolbook and teachers because they had to fill up their pupils' time with something useful and valid while waiting for Highway.

Anyway, EFL practitioners did not stay idle, nor did the responsible people at the Ministry level: teachers under their supervisors' guidance most of the time, looked for some material to teach, drawing on their own experience or adapting activities from Accelerating Highway and other English language manuals; as for the Ministry officials, they supplied schools with photocopies of the first 2 units of the book and the relating teaching instructions. And late in November, the so expected book, “Highway” was at last released after it had been made a “Quick Way”. A controversial birth, was it not?!

Anyway, the TEFL community in Morocco are aware of the critical conjuncture our system of education is undergoing: the launched reform is being implemented on the basis of the illustrious “White Book” which extolled and advocated a positive upgrading of our educational system on the basis of

the elementary principles of democracy: consultation, commitment, transparency, accountability among others and we should all give it the chance to pan out.

Talking about consultation, it did take place before deciding to adopt gradually the present “High-Quick Way” as a general English course for what used to be called the secondary cycle, or the newly called Tronc Commun and the two-year baccalaureate cycle. Commitment, I would not think there is or there will be someone who may but manifest strong will to see the High-Quick Way project succeed and bring about the awaited outcomes which will pave the way for better learning of foreign languages in Morocco. To prove it, let us just look back into the waiting time TEFLers went through earlier this school year and consider how they reacted to the circumstances: they, with some minor exceptions, all manifested some understanding towards the situation and contributed positively to make things go. Concerning accountability it must not be a mere slogan, devoid of any meaning; it must be meaningful, it must be practised and I think the beginning of this school year has given us an occasion to show that we mean what we say; unfortunately we did not make much of it.

As stated above, education should be the concern of the whole nation and not only of those who are in position to make decisions. Open and transparent communication strategies with all concerned stakeholders in the educational realm should be adopted, and above all consistency between what is claimed and what is practiced should be maintained if we really want to achieve the desired school outcome: independent adaptive learners/citizens who will be able to apply what they learn in school to various and unpredictable situations they may encounter in real life.

MINUTES OF THE 1st G.C. MEETING

September 7, 2002, IAV, Rabat

The first MATE meeting of the academic year 2002/2003 was held at Rabat Agronomy Institute on Saturday, September 7, 2002, from 9:30 to 16:00. The meeting was attended by:

Abdellatif Zaki, Amal Lamhiouli, Abderrahim Ghaiti, Khadija Zizi, Rachida Krikech, Abderrahim Saadouni, Fahmi Madani, Mohamed Makhfi, Ayoub Ait Ali, Mohamed Najbi, Nouredine Bendouqi, Mohammed Hassim, Ahmed Chaibi, and Abdelkrim Raddadi.

After a short welcome introduction and an apology about whatever overreaction from any member of the board, also for any mails that may have looked little

nasty for some, A. Zaki moved to the agenda of the meeting and asked the audience to react to the paper (suggested strategies) sent earlier by e-mail.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- MATE has received a dhs 16000 from Macmillan. Zaki suggested the amount should not be transferred into MATE account, a matter of complying with the association guidelines. The money should be kept aside and channelled to one of the MATE expenses. A. Lamhaouili is to take charge.

- The \$ 3000 from RELO meant to cater for the digitizing of proceedings is about to be issued. Bouziane has already contracted a professional team

to work on the project. A. Raddadi is pursuing the operation while Bouziane is in Sri Lanka.

- The ICT project that was earlier scheduled in Martil during the first week of September has been postponed, due to the recent administrative adjustments at the level of the Ministry of National Education (MNE). The project is rescheduled in November (Sat. November 2 through Wed. 6), either jointly with the MNE or MATE on its own.

- During the SIE 2002, A. Zaki and 3 other members had a meeting with Mary Lou McCliskey, TESOL international president. Zaki had explained that MATE would definitely benefit from TESOL who should also be a partner to MATE. The fee being too high for MATE and doesn't cascade on the overall MATE members, TESOL should be aware. Mary Lou had sent a mail to Zaki stating some remarks based on a letter/ meeting with Bouchaib Zahaoui, who claims to be the FELT president (a Casa based association of teachers of English). Zaki did respond to TESOL and straightened up data about MATE. Raddadi will follow contacts with TESOL.

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2002-2003:

A survey during the first three months (till December) to be conducted on what is the ideal profile of a teacher, trainer, and get proposals and action plan to enhance the conditions for the suggested profile.

The action plan is to be pursued throughout the year and made consistent through a solid strategy to secure feasibility and reduce digressions.

The projected plan is as follows:

- During term I up to January 23, 2003, a half day activity is to be organised in the following venues:

Taza – Rachidia – Khouribga – Settat – Marrakech – Agadir - Taounate.

- N. Bendouqi suggested the action to be targeted towards Quick Way book. He would submit a proposal by September 14, bits and pieces & hints on how to deal with the book. Fahmi (who had used the first version of the book before) will also draft a paper and send it for publication in the coming Newsletter issue.

- Study days are to be maintained for programming.

- Professional speaking is to be coordinated by N. Bendouqi.

Colloquia

- Language planning/Sociolinguistics: Raddadi will prospect the possibility with Mohamed Laamiri, Dean of Oujda Faculty of Letters. The seminar would host 50 to 60 people and last 2 days.

- Teacher supervision: There should be one national and one regional. Members of the board should prospect the possibility of the academies to host one; Ayoub to see with Settat, Bendouqi with Fez, Saadouni Marrakech, and Fahmi Agadir.

- Management colloquium: Ayoub and Raddadi should pursue contacts and scouting on possibility to organize Management Colloquium in Casablanca.

- The project on Communication: We should approach Abdellatif Benchrifa, Meknes Moulay Ismail University President for the colloquium.

The Regional Conferences

- Marrakech Regional Conference should be more focused on practical teaching issues, unlike the national conference meant to deal with broader academic issues.

- Essaouira should be boosted and given more support and prospect possibility of a regional conference.

- Beni Mellal to be revisited. A. Chaibi thinks there is a lot of potential there including the CADAP.

- Laayoune. Hassim will make contacts to prospect possibilities there.

ICTs

There should be one in Fez. Coordination should be sought with N. Ghiati and M. Ouakrim.

Fartima Kalyati will send a report on the previous Kenitra ICT held at Talbi's private institution.

Amal will pursue and prospect ICT in Mohammedia.

Casablanca is to be seriously considered: Ayoub and Raddadi will contact different people/institutions to come up with 2 to 3 materialized programs.

Raddadi will fax to Zaki a list of all Casablanca high schools and inspectors.

Courses

Summer courses to be maintained.

A feasibility study for the entire year course is to be carried out. Zaki will pursue the project.

Intensive Business instead of ESP: K. Zizi and Ayoub Ait Ali will prepare a project of a 2 to 3 day course.

The National Conference

Fez has been strongly considered. The dates will be April 8-12 and the theme should be around enhancing

quality in language education in Morocco. N. Bedouqi suggested adding more angles to the theme.

Before ending the meeting, Zaki asked the people present to come up with articles and other forms of contribution for the Newsletter.

MATE-TESOL RELATIONS

An email from Mary Lou McCloskey, TESOL President

Date: August 15, 2002
To: TESOL Board of Directors
CC: MATE Board of Directors, Laura Bryant, TESOL Member Services Coordinator
From: Mary Lou McCloskey
Re: Report on my meeting with the President and Board Members of the Moroccan Association of Teachers of English, July 18, 2002

I attended the 18th Summer Institute of English (SIE) in Rabat, Morocco. The institute is co-sponsored by the National Ministry of Education of Morocco, the US Department of State, and the British Council. (A report on the institute will be sent separately and will be found on the Department of State website.)

During the SIE, I was able to meet with Abdellatif Zaki, president of MATE, along with MATE Board members, including Abdelkrim Raddadi, Ahmed Chaibi, and Ayoub Ait Ali, on July 18, 2002. Christine Coombe, president of GulfTESOL, was also present at part of the meeting. The MATE officers were very pleased to have the opportunity to meet with the president of TESOL. They were concerned that communication with TESOL had not been clear in the recent past and there had not been continuity in communication with TESOL staff. This proved to be a valuable and timely meeting.

MATE seemed to have a history of misunderstandings with TESOL. Concerns included:

1. Officers of MATE expressed that they were concerned that the relationship between TESOL and affiliates was not reciprocal – that affiliates paid dues and filled out much paperwork for TESOL and paid for an officer to attend the convention, but that TESOL did not appropriately benefit MATE. I shared benefits of affiliation with TESOL: training of affiliate leaders, opportunities to apply for speaker grants and affiliate travel grants and the fact that TESOL Board members would present at the MATE convention without charging an honorarium. The officers shared a past discussion with a staff member of TESOL explaining that they would have to wait four years to receive such an affiliate grant and I suggested that I wasn't aware of such a limitation and that TESOL gave priority to less affluent affiliates in its selection.

2. The president of MATE reported a meeting with a previous TQ editor in which the editor stated that the TESOL Quarterly would not be able to publish qualified articles from Moroccan authors because

articles from other parts of the world took priority. I explained the selection process for articles in TQ and the efforts that TESOL is making in its publication program to include, encourage and support non-native writers of English as authors in its publications.

3. Apparently there was also a misunderstanding regarding an offer of assistance with MATE affiliate dues from US Department of State RELO funds and this misunderstanding was the cause of non-payment. The misunderstanding was cleared up to the satisfaction of MATE Board members through discussion of the situation with Abdelkrim Raddadi of the Cultural Affairs Office of the Department of State. I am delighted to report that MATE has determined that it will pay the back dues and continue to affiliate with TESOL.

In a separate discussion at a "TESOL" table at lunch at the SIE on July 18th, I sat with Christine Coombs, president of Arab TESOL (also a consultant at the SIE) and a group of Moroccan teachers interested in talking about TESOL. Interestingly, teachers in Morocco have organized a second group of teachers of English at the secondary level. This organization applied for affiliation in the near past and was told by TESOL that they would have to discuss the issue with MATE. This is an interesting situation in the light of the recent changes in the geographical requirements for affiliation with TESOL. Christine and I suggested to the president of this secondary organization that it might be more beneficial to their organization to become an interest section of MATE than to be a separate group for a number of reasons. This does not seem likely in the near future, however. MATE is seen in Morocco as primarily a higher education group and I don't believe that they have established a system of interest sections as of yet.

The meeting was cordial and very productive, I feel. It is so valuable to have face-to-face discussion when there have been past miscommunications. I have requested that Laura Bryant follow up the discussion of the topics with written statements of current TESOL policy regarding the issues raised. I hope that MATE and TESOL will be able to collaborate smoothly from now forward, and that in the future we will act quickly to clear up any misinformation and misunderstandings that might get in our way.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Lou McCloskey
TESOL President 2002-2003

WHY SHOULD TESTING IN MOROCCO BE REVISITED?

Abdelmajid Bouziane

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INTRODUCTION

Testing has always been an essential component of the teaching process. Teachers are generally not only involved in designing, administering, and scoring tests but also in interpreting outcomes, albeit they may not be always reasonably knowledgeable about all these matters. The ways testing is carried out have been criticised everywhere (cf., Linn, 2000 on testing in the US). In Morocco, voices have articulated their dissatisfaction regarding testing and have suggested revisiting it. Testimonials to such dissatisfactions are reported in this paper. The paper also provides recommendations in an attempt to remedy some of the flaws.

1. RESEARCH INTO TESTING IN MOROCCO

Despite the scarcity of research on testing in Morocco, the available body of research tends to question existing testing practices. ElMazgualdi (1995) conducted an empirical investigation on the psychological impacts of testing on adolescents' attitudes. He found that in case of success, adolescents formulate positive attitudes towards learning and believe that success in studying entails success in life. Similarly, failure leads to negative attitudes towards self and school and to a strong belief that failure will accompany students even after school. In a smaller scale, Bouchouk (1987) investigated the way teachers of Arabic scored compositions. Although he provided detailed scales based on the analytic method of scoring, the raters came up with significantly inconsistent scores. This implies that scoring is carried out arbitrarily. Melouk et al. (1992) analyzed the nature of questions assigned in different subjects in the Baccalaureate exams. They found that most of the questions fell into the low levels of Bloom's taxonomy (1956) and that high order questions were scarce. In short, the surveyed research thus far indicates that testing in Morocco needs further refinements to cater for different cognitive levels.

Specifically in ELT, the available body of research, though small, suggests that this area is not immunised from flaws. Hammani (1995) analyzed the scores allotted by teachers in both continuous assessment and academy exams. He found that not only were the marks of continuous assessment inflated but also did not correlate significantly with the academy exams ($r = .38$, not significant). Lakouissi (1997) investigated the Official Guidelines, test specifications, and baseline data collected over five weeks and found that Baccalaureate exams had negative washback effect on:

- (1) the content of teaching: prescribed contents, excessive focus on language form than available in textbooks, less focus on speaking and listening;
- (2) method of teaching: unclear objectives, more focus on language knowledge than on developing skills and competencies, textbooks exhibit teaching methods different from those in the Official Guidelines; and
- (3) continuous assessment: tests are hardly used for formative purposes, oral skills assessment is marginalized, and written quizzes are generally language-oriented.

Melouk (2001) reported on a national survey involving both test designers and teachers and came to the conclusion that these parties were only partly satisfied with the outcomes of item-bank system as it was done in Morocco. Particularly, teachers felt being marginalized in the processes of item-bank (or testing) construction.

The testing of skills is not any better. In reading, the types of question asked to test reading comprehension lag far behind the requirements of critical reading. The documented studies show that comprehension questions remain at the factual level. Ezzaki (1986) investigated the types of comprehension questions in Moroccan textbooks (primary and secondary school system) and some Baccalaureate exams. He found that high order questions were scarce. In the light of these findings, Bouziane (1993) investigated how secondary school students perform in answering low- and high-order questions in French (FL1) and English (FL2). As expected, students could not answer the high-order questions adequately because mainly of lack of training. More interestingly, teachers who scored the students' outcomes showed little consistency in scoring high-order questions. This implies that teachers hold different, and subjective, frames of reference when scoring such questions.

In writing, the available studies confirm that 'no news is good news'. Dahbi and Britten (1989a, 1989b) referred to scoring written discourse as being a staircase phenomenon. That is, compositions are thrown on stairs marked with figures and each composition is allotted the score of the stair on which it lands. This alludes to inconsistent scoring. As a remedy, the two researchers trained a group of teachers in using an adapted analytic method stipulated with prior training in understanding its scales. Apart from a few hints, very little information is known about the training package they suggested. Naciri (1995) analyzed teachers' responding to students' writing and found that there was a big discrepancy between teachers' beliefs and their actual

responses to students' drafts. This implies that these teachers did not refer to stable and collectively shared standards when responding to drafts and, by extension, when scoring drafts. Particularly in scoring, she found that the same compositions were allotted better scores by secondary school teachers than by university teachers, hence inconsistent benchmarking reference.

The above state-of-the art of testing provides enough evidence to reconsider testing in Morocco in general and in ELT in particular. All the documented studies call for further teacher training. The common areas of training are test design, writing items, using statistics, using computers, conducting research in testing, and testing matters in general. El Mazgualdi (1996) testifies to this when he writes: "We have not found a study devoted specifically to educational evaluation of the Moroccan system of education" (p. 4; my translation).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Some recommendations for a better practice of testing seem necessary:

1. State-of-the art articles should be publicized to share the findings of research, bearing in mind that this latter is in general conducted for academic purposes.
2. Surveys, like the one conducted by Melouk (2001), and reports are highly recommended to identify teachers' and test designers' attitudes and needs. These will also help evaluate the existing testing practices.
3. Researchers should be encouraged to conduct research on testing.
4. There should be a national board of examination which will look after the quality of tests, the design of test rubrics, the training of testers and teachers, and the study of test washback effect. Such a board is envisaged within the new reform of education and training.
5. The creation of a MATE testing SIG which will initiate in-depth discussions on testing as well as disseminate information about new ways of assessing.
6. The last, but not the least, recommendation has to do with considering testing from a global perspective, rather than from the bits and pieces of different subjects as is the case now. That is, testing, and teaching thereof, policies should be complementary across disciplines and levels.

CONCLUSION

This article has shown why testing in Morocco should be revisited. The documented research not only raises the drawbacks of the existing testing practices but also calls for major changes. It also provides some

recommendations. It should be noted that one of the limitations of this article is that it does not provide alternatives which will lead to better practices.

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AN OVERVIEW OF MATE TWO-DAY ICT COLLOQUIA

Mohammed HASSIM

INTRODUCTION:

The Two-day information and communication Technology (ICT) series of Colloquia was organized by MATE jointly with Dar America, Casablanca, and in collaboration with the Academies and delegations of the Ministry of National Education (M.N.E) together with the inspectors of English in the areas concerned. This series of colloquia was organized during the academic year 2001-2002 in seven regions of Morocco, four of which were financially taken charge of by Dar America. The regions were as follows: Ouarzazate, Beni Mellal, Settat, Agadir, Laayoune, El Jadida, and Errachidia. The participants who benefitted from this project were secondary school teachers, inspectors of English and two university teachers. The project was coordinated by Mohammed HASSIM, inspector of English in Zagora delegation of M.N.E.

1- AIMS OF THE TWO DAY ICT COLLOQUIA:

The colloquia aimed to:

- raise awareness to some pedagogical and technical issues and implications related to ICT in ELT
- train teachers on some computer and internet applications
- develop ways of integrating ICT in the classroom within the Moroccan context
- introduce ways of using ICT in professional development.

2- GENERAL PEDAGOGICAL & TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE COLLOQUIA:

The approach adopted was pedagogy-driven and the emphasis was on language methodologies that could be implemented successfully with the aid of new technologies in the Moroccan classroom with its own specific context. The colloquia were to be considered as a process, in that the participants were provided with the necessary skills to take care of their own professional development in ICT in ELT after each colloquium and to carry out some productive projects.

Participants were also required to spread information and share skills related to ICT among their colleagues at school via workshops and collaborative work and among their students in the classroom through projects and lessons based on new technologies.

It was expected that the participants taking part in these colloquia had some basic knowledge of ICT, such as; the basics of Windows 95 or higher, word-processing, using a web-browser and e-mail.

A booklet (of about 150 pages) was compiled and distributed to the participants. It contained an idea

about the programme of the colloquia and included some material for reading during and after the two days. The articles and other material included were meant to serve as a starting point for more profound reading and research, and also to help in triggering a rich discussion among trainers and participants.

Floppy disks were also handed out to the participants to save the collected material during the workshops and from the internet and also to save their own work.

3- STANDARD PROGRAMME OF THE COLLOQUIA:

DAY 1: BASIC SKILLS

Morning

- **Plenary: The role of the computer and the internet in ELT**

- **Computer applications:**

- Word-processing, creating folders, using floppy discs,...
- Using editing/publishing programmes (MS Word, MS Publisher,...)
- Clipart, photos, photo editors...
- PowerPoint
- Multimedia/CD ROMs

Afternoon

- **Plenary: Web-based teacher development & communication**

- **Searching the web:**

- Search skills
- Using search engines
- Searching educational sites for teachers & students
- Copy right issues
- Winzipping

- **E-mail:**

- Mailing lists
- E-discussion groups
- Internet relay chat
- E-mail projects

DAY 2: INTEGRATING THE COMPUTER AND THE INTERNET IN THE CLASSROOM

Morning

- **Plenary: The one computer classroom**

- **Building up web pages & websites:**

- Using editing programmes (MS FrontPage)
- Demonstration & application
- Building up an e-resource centre

Afternoon

- Plenary: Computer & Web-based testing

-E-testing:

- Computer-based testing: Demonstration & application
- Web-based testing: Demonstration & application
- Project work

EVALUATION OF THE COLLOQUIUM

4- TRAINERS:

- **Mohammed HASSIM**, inspector of English, Zagora delegation of M.E.N.
- **Abderrahim SAADOUNI**, inspector of English, Casablanca, Derb Sultan-Fida delegation of M.N.E.
- **Abdelmajid BOUZIANE**, teacher of English at the Royal Navy, Casablanca
- **Mohammed HAMMANI**, inspector of English, Khouribga delegation of M.N.E.
- **Ahmed ATLAGH, Abdellah AMHAOUL and Salaheddine BELASSAL**: secondary school teachers from local areas who have some technical and pedagogical experience in ICT.

5- SCHEDULE OF THE COLLOQUIA (DATES, REGIONS, TRAINERS & PARTICIPANTS):

Below are the dates of the colloquia, the regions where they were organised, the trainers involved and the number of participants in every region:

Regions	Dates	Participants	Trainers
Ouarzazate/ Zagora	October 27-28, 2001	25	Hassim Saadouni Amhaoul Belassal
Beni Mellal	November 10-11, 2001	25	Hammani Hassim Saadouni
Settat	January 2-3, 2002	21	Bouziane Saadouni Hassim
Agadir	January 5-6, 2002	26	Saadouni Hassim Atlagh
Laayoune	January 12-13, 2002	22	Hassim Saadouni
Eljadida	January 18-19, 2002	22	Hassim Saadouni Bouziane
Errachidia	February 9-10, 2002	22	Saadouni Hassim

6- EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT:

The colloquia were evaluated through three media:

- A- pre- and post-colloquium questionnaires
- B- feedback via email
- C- problems and achievements.

A - PRE- AND POST-QUESTIONNAIRES FINDINGS:

Two questionnaires were distributed to the participants before and after the colloquium. The findings are given below in a descending order (the most important percentages first). Only significant figures are included here, and no interpretation of figures is provided (this is left for a coming detailed study of the project).

- Colloquia: 7

- **Participants:** about 140 (the exact number of participants who benefited from the colloquia was 163, including guest participants and supervisors in the regions)
- **Completed questionnaires (both pre- & post-programme):** 109 (=77.85%)

a- PRE-PROGRAMME QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS:

After having an idea about the programme of the colloquium, the participants completed a 5- question questionnaire.

i- Do you think that the integration of IT in the Moroccan ELT syllabus is feasible at the present time? (If so, how? If not, why?)

- No: 44.03%
- Yes: 32.11%
- Yes, but : 18.34%

ii- What are you expecting to learn from this colloquium?

- Using computers in teaching & learning (practical examples): 79.81%
- Basic skills in ICT (applications): 38.53%
- Using the internet (accessing /searching/ downloading...): 22.93%
- Communication through the internet (e-mail/ chat): 10.09%
- Building up websites: 4.58%

iii- Are there any parts in the programme that you have difficulty with?

- Computer applications: 22.93%
- Building up websites/webpages: 15.59%
- Searching the internet/using search engines: 15.59%
- Web/computer-based tests: 10.09%

- Not really: 8.25
- PowerPoint: 7.33%
- Almost everything: 7.33%
- Multimedia/CD ROMs: 6.42%
- Integrating IT in ELT in Moroccan context: 6.42%
- Using authoring programmes: 3.66%
- WinZip: 3.66%
- Using editing programmes: 2.75%
- Technical terms: 2.75%

iv- How do you hope this colloquium will help you?

- Using computers in teaching & learning (practical examples): 53.21%
- Basic skills in ICT (applications): 48.62%
- Web/computer-based tests: 10.09%
- Searching the internet: 10.09%
- Collaboration with colleagues: 9.17%
- Building up websites/webpages: 2.75%
- Communication through the internet: 0.91%

v- Any comments to make about the programme?

- The programme is very interesting/relevant/ rich...: 52.29%
- Too ambitious/overloaded: 12.84%
- The training should be extended and repeated: 7.33%
- We hope we can cover it all: 5.50%

b- POST-PROGRAMME QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS:

By the end of the colloquium, the participants completed a 6-question questionnaire.

i- Did the colloquium meet any of your expectations? In what way?

- Yes: 93.57%
- To some extent: 5.50%
- No: 0.91%

***Justifications:**

- We learned many new things: 50.45%
- It urged us to implement IT in the classroom: 13.76%
- It motivated us to learn more: 11.00%
- It changed our attitude positively: 4.58%

ii- What are the things you did not learn that you hoped to?

- More practice was needed: 9.17%
- Networking/ mailing lists...: 3.66%
- More about word processing was needed: 2.75%
- Programming : 2.75%

iii- What do you feel is the most important thing that you learned from this colloquium?

- Building up websites/webpages/FrontPage: 31.19%
- Using IT in ELT: 26.60%
- Searching the web: 21.10%
- PowerPoint: 18.34%
- Everything/many things: 14.67%
- Using e-mail: 13.76%
- Creating folders: 6.42%
- Word-processing: 5.50%
- Using CD ROMs: 4.58%
- Test design on the net: 3.66%
- Bookmarking through email: 2.75%

iv- Was there anything that you learned that was unexpected?

- Building up websites/webpages/FrontPage: 25.68%
- Almost everything/a lot/ many things: 15.59%
- PowerPoint: 12.84%
- WinZip: 6.42%
- Using IT in ELT: 5.50%
- Searching the net: 5.50%
- Bookmarking through email: 4.58%
- Inserting pictures/sound: 4.58%
- Using CD ROMs/multimedia: 3.66%
- Using e-mail: 3.66%
- Test design on the net: 2.75%

v- Was there any change after the colloquium in your attitude towards the implementation of IT in the Moroccan context? In what way?

- Yes: 88.07%

***Justifications:**

- We become more confident: 27.52%
- We become more positive: 16.51%
- It made it easier: 9.17%
- It was a reinforcement: 7.33%
- It made us want to learn more: 6.42%
- It made it necessary to have a computer: 3.66%

- To some extent: 5.50%

- No: 2.75%

***Justifications:**

- Financial problems: 1.83%
- Negative administrative attitudes: 0.91%

vi- Any comments to make about the programme implemented?

- A useful/ interesting/ rich ... programme: 58.71%
- More time is needed/ more practice is needed/ a bit overloaded: 41.28%
- Follow up is needed: 4.58%
- There was a slow internet connection/not enough machines: 3.66%
- We need another colloquium to see Moroccan teacher developed material: 0.91%

- Very useful programme for beginners: 0.91%

B- FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS BY E-MAIL:

Some feedback was received from participants through email (This was published in detail in MATE Newsletter, Volume 22 (3), Winter 2002)

C- PROBLEMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

PROBLEMS:

Some of the problems encountered were:

- participants had mixed technical abilities which made it difficult to go at the same pace in the different workshops
- the programme could not be fully implemented in all regions because of the problem stated above. So it was necessary to omit some parts in some regions
- technical materials were not adequate in all regions (some software was needed which influenced some parts of the programme)
- technical support was lacking in some regions (some machines broke down and there was nobody to fix some of the occurring problems)
- in some colloquia, it was difficult to carry out the programme with two trainers (other trainers were not available because of some personal commitments).

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Immediate achievements:

In addition to the feedback drawn from the questionnaires and emails, the following two immediate important achievements can be mentioned:

- participants with limited technical knowledge and skills started to be interested and get some self-confidence in ICT
- the importance of ICT in ELT started to be clearer for participants given the practical examples they had in the workshops.

Medium-term achievements:

After the colloquia, the following achievements were reported:

- the same programme was repeated by participants in Ourzazate delegation of M.N.E., Shtouka Ait Baha Delegation of M.N.E. (see a report of this by Ayyad Chraa in MATE Newsletter, Spring 2002, 23.1), Essaouira delegation of M.N.E.;

- a two-day regional conference was organised in Ouarzazate by Ouarzazate-Zagora MATE Regional Branch (May, 2002), the theme was "ICT for ELT". Most workshops and presentations were delivered by ICT colloquium participants;

- websites were created by some participants in the colloquia (Agadir MATE Regional Branch website: <http://membres.lycos.fr/mateagadir/>, A. Rasmy's website (a secondary school teacher): <http://www.rasmy.fm.fr>, Beni Mellal Mate Regional Branch Website;

- workshops were conducted by participants in their areas with their inspectors (K. Lguerch, Jrada; A. Belghazi, Zagora; S. Belassal, Agdez/Zagora; F. Kalyati, Kenitra);

- some email projects were conducted (F. Kalyati, Kenitra; A. Rasmy, Marrakech; M. Maanaoui, Zagora);

- e-resource centres were built (N. Belkachla, Marrakech);

- an electronic organisation of the lycee's library was conducted (A. Lafridi, Tagounite/Zagora);

- computer-based tests were developed (A. Amhaoul, Ouarzazate);

- groupwork activities using PowerPoint were developed (L. Ahmam, Ouazazte; A. Belghazi, Zagora);

- partnerships were set up (Ouarzazate-Zagora MATE Regional Branch with the Training Centre of Primary School Teachers; Beni Mellal MATE Regional Branch with the Faculty of Sciences and Techniques; Errachidia English teachers with Errachidia Delegation of M.N.E. and the Training Centre of Primary School Teachers).

CONCLUSION:

Generally speaking, the ICT colloquia yielded satisfactory results and most of the objectives set by the organisers were successfully achieved according to the evaluation media adopted; the results of which were stated in this report. I hope that this report has given a clear idea about the ICT colloquia. More details can be found in MATE website: www.mate.org.ma and MATE Newsletter (latest issues can be found in the website). The report has dealt with the first seven two-day colloquia. MATE ICT project is still going on, and the above mentioned two-day colloquia have been followed by many other colloquia, workshops, study days, regional conferences. So I have not dealt with these. More information can be included in the coming issue of MATE Newsletter.

QUESTIONING IN A READING COMPREHENSION LESSON

Omar Marzouki
Delegation of Kenitra

This is a task-based workshop meant to be done by a group of teachers or by a supervisor/teacher trainer and a group of teachers or trainees.

OBJECTIVES:

The participants will be able to

1. discuss different ways of questioning in a reading comprehension lesson.
2. categorize different types of reading comprehension questions.
3. write a checklist to assess reading comprehension questions.

TASK 1: (pair/group work followed by discussion)

Discuss the statements below. Which statements do you agree/disagree with?

1. Questioning in a reading lesson is essentially an attempt to test comprehension.
2. In order to check comprehension appropriately the teacher should ask students not to look at their texts when answering questions.
3. A perfect answer to a question teaches nothing, but each wrong answer is an opportunity for learning.
4. When dealing with comprehension questions the teacher should accept only the first correct answer and move on to the next question.
5. Written questions should always be answered in writing.
6. Questions of literal comprehension are essential preliminaries to any serious work on the text.
7. The teacher's evaluation of the students' answers should focus more on the form.
8. Teachers should refrain from evaluating the students' product until several students have given their answers.

TASK 2: (group work followed by reports)

Discuss the questions you usually ask in a reading comprehension lesson. Can you group them by type in a systematic arrangement?

TASK 3: (group discussion)

Read the following taxonomy of comprehension questions suggested by Johnson (1978). How does it compare to the categories you came up with in task 2?

CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Textually-explicit questions	low-order level, for factual/literal comprehension: "reading the lines".
Textually-implicit questions	middle-order level, for inference: "reading between the lines".
Scriptually-implicit questions	high-order level, for the application of one's knowledge about the world: "reading beyond the lines".

The questions below are from Lesson 20 in EIL2, what categories do they belong to? Tick the appropriate box, then discuss your answers.

TEQ = Textually-explicit questions
TIQ = Textually-implicit questions
SIQ = Scriptually-implicit questions

QUESTIONS	TEQ	TIQ	SIQ
1. What are Laura's two problems?			
2. When does Laura want to give her father a present?			
3. What does she want to give him? Why?			
4. Do people often give pets as presents in Morocco?			
5. What do you think of Laura's plan?			
6. What do you think would be best?			
7. Why can't she ask her father?			
8. Why must she borrow money?			
9. Why not from her mother?			
10. Who do you think she would borrow from?			
11. What does "you" in line 17 refer to?			

TASK 4: (pair work followed by discussion)

Read the text on page 241 in EIL2 and design questions to illustrate the three categories of the

taxonomy. Write at least 2 questions for each category.

TEQ	
TIQ	
SIQ	

TASK 5: (pair/group work followed by discussion)

Write a checklist to take into account when assessing reading comprehension questions

Compare your checklist with the following assessing questions. What questions from your checklist would you add to the list?

- (a) *Can the questions be answered without reading the text?*
The answer should be **no!**
It is quite surprising how often it turns out to be **yes**, especially when MC questions are concerned.
- (b) *Are there several questions on every part of the text?*
This is not a principle to be maintained at all costs, but it is unusual to find a part of a text that is not worth any attention. Some textbooks seem to have a ration of questions for each text and this may result in patchy coverage, if one part demands a lot of questions at the expense of others.
- (c) *Are there enough questions?*
Textbooks rarely supply anything like enough questions; many of the extra ones should be

presented orally and geared to the difficulties that arise in the classroom.

- (d) *Are the questions varied in type?*
(e) *Do some questions specifically try to make students aware of the strategies a reader needs?*
(f) *Do the questions attempt to help the students to understand?*
Or have they been written only as tests?
(g) *Are they written in language that is more difficult than the text?*
We hope for the answer **no**.
(h) *Do the answers require language that is too difficult for the students to handle?*
Again, we hope for **no**.

(Nuttal 1982: 134)

READINGS:

Dutta S.K. 1994. 'Predicting as a pre-reading activity.' *English Teaching Forum*. Vol. 32/1.
Ezzaki, A. 1986 'Questioning in language education' in the *Proceedings of the XIth MATE Annual Conference*.
Kissok, C and Iyortsuun, P. 1982. *A Guide to Questioning: Classroom Procedures for Teachers*. London: The Macmillan Press.
Konaré, B. 1994. 'Reading comprehension in large classes.' *English Teaching Forum*. Vol. 32/4.
Nuttal, C. 1982. *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language*. London: Heinemann Educational Books.
Silberstein, S. 1987. 'Let's take another look at reading: Twenty-five years of reading instruction.' *English Teaching Forum*. Vol. 25/4.
Tollefson, J. W. 1989. 'A system for improving teachers' questions.' *English Teaching Forum*. Vol. 27/1.

NEWS FROM BENI MELLAL MATE LOCAL BRANCH

**BP. 412 poste principal
Beni mellal
Tel: 063 47 88 98**

THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD FOR THE TWO-YEAR PERIOD 2002-2004

- President: Mohamed Jaafari
Vice-President: Ahmed Lhor
Secretary-General: Mustapha Zanzoun
Vice Secretary-General: Hassan Elmrbet
Treasurer: Said El Mouhtarim
Vice Treasurer: Noureddine Bourima
Counsellors: Ahmed Mouhy Eddine, Elhassan Mourabiti, Mohamed Chaabihi

COMMUNICATION & ORGANIZATION

Communication between the English professionals in the region, spreading MATE news and activities to far-reaching areas and material provision were the focus of the discussion during the last general assembly of MATE local branch in Beni Mellal on the 3rd June, 2002. Such various but inextricable issues revealed the great expectations with which the adherents were unanimously looking forward to the local board's performance. Consequently, the newly-elected board is to accommodate the pace of its performance according to these aspirations and expectations. These are needs and they will have to be turned into principles and objectives.

Therefore, high primacy is to be given to establishing the norms and the means of communication between the adherents and the board on the one side and among the adherents themselves on the other. Accordingly, a URL on the internet is created for the local branch; and a webmaster is committed to updating it regularly. In addition, a mailing list is opened at yahoo-groups.com for the adherents who opt for live discussion of actual pedagogical matters through a chat room, or collecting and exchanging didactic material through shared bookmarks.

As for far-reached regions, they are given priority in the MATE-day committee's schedule, in coordination with the inspectorate and the CADAPP. However, initiatives from the areas concerned are called for, the aim being to promote professional development.

Ad hoc committees are also a source of profound concern to the local board with the hope to organise and mainly to divide up responsibilities. Each group of two active members will be in charge of and accountable for one single scope of action within our framework. Here and now all the adherents are invited to join and supplement the work of any committee in charge of the field of their interest. The ideal dream is to come up with an organization of stakeholders. Furthermore, the creation of subcommittees in different centres of the region would surely culminate in a wonderful spectrum of activities. Let's hope for the best.

Apart from the IT and the MATE-day committees that have already built an archive from a two-year's work, further committees will inaugurate new scope of action. Hence, MATE-magazine or forum committee is devoted to collecting, editing and printing the teachers' reflections on their work. The other committee is concerned with the literary-study competition for students. The rationale for this committee is threefold; the first is to grant the due value to Moroccan or Mellali -if there are any-attempts at literary craft in the English Language; the second is to encourage university as well as high school students to do extra-curricular readings; and the third is to ensure MATE popularity among students and consolidate its reputation as a community of educationalists. Each committee organizes its meetings, makes contacts, plans its schedule of activities, announces it and conserves its documents and archives. In one word, it is an endeavour to establish and maintain a new tradition of organizational work within professional frameworks.

This endeavour, albeit motivating, is at stake. Rather, it is doomed to failure if it is not sustained. The utmost support naturally comes from the adherents' physical presence and intellectual participation in activities. Then, extra-financial back-up may be sought elsewhere. Finally, Mate local branch, as a community

of intellectuals, has to keep pace with and promote hence benefit from the rate of change happening in our region, mainly the decentralization of pedagogical power and the possibility for the civil society to participate in the pedagogical decision-making as long as this brings no harm to the autonomy and independence of our association.

A POSSIBLE SCHEDULE FOR THE YEAR 2002-2003

I- Committees:

- 1- IT committee: S. El Mouhtarim, N. Bourima, El. Mourabiti , M. Jaafari
- 2- MATE-day committee: A. Mouhy eddine, M. Zanzoun, M. Jaafari, A. Lhor
- 3- Mellali English magazine/forum committee: H. Elmrbabet, M. Chaabihi, N. Bourima.
- 4- Newsletter committee: S. El Mouhtarim, M. Jaafari, N. Bourima.
- 5- The literary-study competition committee: H. Elmrbabet ,M. Chaabihi, N. Bourima
- 6-Local Branch's interlocutor with Dar America in Casa: S. El Mouhtarim

II- Agenda of activities:

Study- day:

- *Date: Saturday , 2nd November, 2002. The whole day.
- *Theme: QUICK WAY, methodology and techniques; Competency-based teaching; Content & theme-based teaching. The role of the teacher, etc.
- *Venue: Academy of Beni Mellal.
- *All the teachers (Azilal included).
- *Co-organizers: the inspectorate of English & CADAPP.
- *Participants: local professionals and guests.

Mate-Days:

- * Focus: workshops and demonstration lessons related to QUICK WAY and the implementation of the methodology behind it.
- *Dates:
 - Fkih Ben Saleh: Tuesday, 17th December.
 - Tadla: Thursday, 26th December.
 - Azilal: contact with the inspector, H. El Boustani, should be don first.
 - Beni Mellal: Monday, 16th December
- *Co-organizers: the inspectorate of English & CADAPP.
- *Participants: local professionals & guests.

IT colloquium: 24th January, 2003.

Regional Conference: Mid. May, 2003.

A REFLECTION ON THE SUMMER COURSE 8-20 JULY 2002, RABAT

Abderrahim Babni (ababni242@yahoo.fr)

First of all, I would like to thank all the staff of MATE for awarding me the opportunity to participate in the summer course organized in Rabat as a teacher of English. I appreciated a lot that experience. It was really enthusiastic and fruitful for me as a novice practitioner. As for my evaluation of that project, it was very successful in so many aspects. First, it gave us an idea about the teaching of English in the Moroccan context. Second, we were able to teach real students. Third, it enabled us break the barriers between theory and practice. Concerning the weaknesses if I may say so, they are few given the idea that the project is still in its infancy. First, five hours a day is a bit tiring not only for teachers but for the students as well. Second, 2 weeks are not enough. The course duration should be extended given the remedial work teachers are supposed to do.

Third, the non-availability of the equipments (tape recorders and electricity) seemed to be real obstacles that impede the achievement of all the objectives set up for that course (listening activities). Fourth, the placement test did not allow us to have an idea about each student's profile. Special care should be given to the placement test in the future so as to make it cover all the skills and sub-skills of the language. In this way, teachers will touch upon students' weaknesses as well as their strength.

As for the relationship between my students and myself, I think that they were very motivated and interested in learning English in spite of the weather. This was due mainly to the positive attitude that holds towards English. The afternoon activities were geared basically towards involving students in non-threatening atmosphere that is anxiety free. The latter proved to be conducive to learning. For more efficiency, the afternoon activities should be thought of carefully before launching the project. The teaching material used is varied for it provides instruction on all the components of the English language. Yet, it has to be supplemented.

This does not mean that the first experience was in vain. In contrast, it was very successful in many sides. It gave us an image about the students' degree of motivation and interest. It also proved to be very rewarding since all the students were completely satisfied with what they received in that very short period of time. They even asked for more.

Last but not least, I hope that the first experience was the starting point of a real project that your Association has the honour to launch in all the regions of Morocco.

I wish you all the best.

Good luck. Thank you very much.

Abderrahmane BABNI.
Erfoud.

Brahim khartite (khartite83@hotmail.com)

General evaluation related to mate summer course

Dear sir,
When I first learned about MATE looking for volunteers to serve as teachers for a period of two weeks, I immediately made up my mind to take part in the project with only one expectation in mind, namely to further my teaching practice and gain more experience, the novice teacher that I am.

No sooner had the summer course started, however, than I realized, to my great surprise, that I was practically involved in an extremely enriching experience with a well-managed and committed organization where everybody's efforts and contributions were recognized regardless of their age, title or even membership.

I appreciated a lot the idea of organizing the summer course all along the annual summer institute where I managed to learn a great deal about both experienced teachers and supervisors from different parts of Morocco. I must also admit that I was extremely impressed by the great devotion of MATE members to their organization, to the projects it embarks on and above all to the future of their profession as language teachers. All along the summer course, I was never let down by any of the staff members. My constant requests and suggestions were always met by smiles and enthusiasm.

General suggestions and recommendations: I would like to suggest that

- The time devoted to the summer course should be a bit prolonged at least to a period of three weeks instead of 10 days
- Team teaching be encouraged (in that it is very helpful for teachers to observe each other and provide feedback to find ways in which to better their performance)
- Supervisors should provide insights and suggestions during feedback sessions for teachers to help them come to terms with their problems, worries and imperfections
- Teacher volunteers should be encouraged to perform better by providing incentives such as attending the next annual summer institute or MATE conferences, etc.

MINUTES OF THE 2nd G.C. MEETING

December 1, 2002, IAV, Rabat

Agenda

Resignation from the Presidency
Report on where things are
Teacher Supervision Resource Book
Proceedings: Martil + Fez + Ourika
The Newsletter
Task distribution

The meeting was attended by:

Abdellatif Zaki, Amal Lamhioui, Fatima Kalyati, Khadija Zizi, Rachida Krikech, Ayoub Ait Ali, Mohamed Najbi, Nouredine Bendouqi, Mohammed Hassim, Abdelmajid Bouziane, Said Berdouz, Driss Merjane and Abdelkrim Raddadi.

The president gave an overview about his health and his serious backache that need complete rest, according to the medical doctor. He then expressed his wish to resign for the rest of the mandate. Because he thought he wouldn't be able to fulfil all the upcoming projects, the president said that the constitution would in such case delegate to the vice-president.

After heated discussion among the GC members and the president wherein all members without exception insisted that A. Zaki should remain in presidency at least until the coming national conference, the latter ended up accepting gentlemanly to carry on his mission.

The GC members agreed on some task distribution in order to alleviate the president's burden and give him the opportunity to get enough rest and follow his medication properly.

New strategy

Reduce the activities by cutting down some earlier planned projects
Promote more face-to-face contacts with teachers
Get back to MATE days
Enhance the on-line material

Tasks distribution

- The Newsletter: M. Hassim and S. Berdouz will take care of the upcoming issues. A. Zaki will hand over some of the data to them. When the NL is ready, it should be sent to A. Zaki.

- The proceedings (Mdiq + Fez + Ourika): A. Raddadi and A. Bouziane will take care of writing to/calling the presenters, collecting the articles, editing and preparing a camera ready for print. The

issue of having one volume for the three events (Mdiq + Fez+ Ourika) or two separate is to be discussed later, when all the data is ready.

The national conference: Fez is still considered as the venue for the annual conference. Several accommodation possibilities are being considered.

ESP conference: A. Raddadi and K. Zizi will work on the coming ESP conference in Agadir in May 2003.

Colloquia

Agadir regional colloquium is still to be considered

Beni Mellal regional colloquium is under way

Miscellaneous

A. Bouziane is the MATE official Webmaster, thus whatever change, comments, add ups updates... should be channelled to him.

R. Krikech will coordinate with M. Ahellal about Teacher supervision seminar.

The British Council is working on their IT project(s) and sorting out their budget after that they will consider projects with MATE.

Macmillan has been in touch with A. Zaki, they have several projects in mind. A. Zaki will pursue.

A. Bouziane is working on organizing an ICT in Casablanca. He also announce the project of digitising MATE proceeding is its final stages

F. Kalyati will prospect an ICT possibility in Kenitra.

M. Ahellal has submitted the final version of the 2nd issue of teacher trainers and supervisors resource book. A digitised version in the form of a CD ROM may be resorted to if the paper based version is not possible.

Dispense
Dépôt légal : 84/9
CCP: 212 927 T

du Timbre
N° 920

Destinataire

MOROCCAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
B.P. 6223, Rabat-Instituts, C.C.P 212 927 T

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Last Name First Name.....
Nationality
Type of membership : Full (Moroccan) Associate (non-Moroccan)
Occupation : Teacher Inspector
Institution
City
Mailing Address
Amount paid
Mode of payment
 CCP (enclose receipt or copy) Check (bank)
 Cash remitted to (Name)

Date:
Signature