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Languages for All

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About

A language teacher for 23 years, I am still learning a lot from every new student. I enjoy sharing my native language and culture but above all I derive a lot of satisfaction from inspiring students to become a good language tutor for themselves and keep learning beyond their university years.

“To have another language is to possess a second soul” - **Charlemagne**

Qualifications

- Maitrise de Français Langue Etrangère
- BA/licence” in English Literature and Civilisation

Biography

I grew up in Lorraine in the North-East of France, in the countryside. I wasn't sure which carrier I wanted to devote myself to after my A-level and I first studied business for a couple of years before deciding it wasn't for me. I had always enjoyed language learning at school and knew how important speaking good English was, so I then turned to studying English literature and Civilisation in Nancy.

Nancy happens to be where the CRAPEL is based (Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues), a center for research in language teaching and learning. One of the module I had chosen in the final year of my degree was “Teaching French as a Foreign Language” which was taught by some of the researchers at CRAPEL who started my vocation as a language teacher and learner.

I never looked back...

Teaching

I started teaching French at Birmingham University in 1992 as a Lectrice in the Department of French. I had just qualified as a teacher of French as a Foreign Language and welcomed the chance to apply my -largely theoretical- knowledge. I mainly taught undergraduates who were quite reluctant to talk in the foreign language and came up with all sorts of ideas and trick help them along the way. A couple of years later I started working for CML, experiencing working with older adults this time, who could be staff from the uni or members from the general public.

As I am not someone who enjoys standing in front of the class, talking, I always carefully plan my lessons so that the students do a lot of the talking themselves, often in pair or groups. I believe that students should be active during a language class, using their imagination and having fun. Having said that, there is no point hiding the fact that learning is hard work and a fair amount of vocabulary needs to be acquired before any proficiency can be reached. I try to give my students ideas on how to manage their learning outside the class.

I do a lot less teaching these days unfortunately given other managerial and administrative duties but I have the pleasure of teaching on both or Open-access and MOMD programmes as well as supervise some of our Tandem learners.

Research

Although my post doesn't require that I am research active, I am very interested in how students learn languages and ways to help them to become more proficient language learners. Consequently I keep informed on the subject and attend regular workshop and conferences.