



ENGLISH TEACHING *profile*

Keith Morrow, teacher,
teacher trainer and editor of *ELT Journal*,
demonstrates that it's always the sweetest
people who like dark chocolate.

Why/how I became a teacher

It's in the blood really. But I was always going to be a French teacher, till I spent a year in France as an undergraduate and realised there were about 60 million French people there who spoke French better than I ever could. That's when I started to think about becoming an English teacher.

Something not many people know about me

If there's dark chocolate and milk chocolate on the table, I'll take the dark – usually.

Something I'm never without

A sense of humour – I hope.

My best teaching moment

Deciding something is 'the best' (or 'the worst') is virtually impossible for me. But what is great for me is, I guess, the same as what is great for everyone. It's when someone gives you some feedback which shows that they have appreciated or enjoyed what you have done.

My worst teaching moment

It's the absence of feedback that makes for awful classroom experiences. The group (or individual) who reacts negatively isn't as bad as the group that doesn't react at all. The 'plum pudding' syndrome is what I dread most when I go into the classroom.

The book I have found most useful

The Language Laboratory and Language Learning by Julian Dakin. The only thing wrong with this book is its title – it actually has very little to do with language laboratories. Published in 1973, it was so far ahead of its time that the world is now just about ready for it. READ IT!! (Or, if you are a Pearson Longman publishing manager, re-issue it!)

My most tricky teaching point

Almost any time a learner asks, 'Why?' Language and people are both so complex that providing an answer that will make sense to the particular learner and to me is usually a real challenge.

How I'd like to be remembered as a teacher

I'd just like to be remembered. People remember people or events that were important for them, and if being in a class of mine turns out to have been important for someone, what could be better as a teacher?

My biggest mistake

Investing my savings in the stock market in November 1999 – since when it has gone dramatically downhill.

My greatest success

Finding love – and having three wonderful children.

My greatest regret

Apart from not having written Julian Dakin's book, I haven't got many. I suppose I would have liked to become rich and famous, but I'm happy, I can afford to live, and I'm being profiled in *ETp*, so it can't all be bad!

My favourite class

The ones I'm teaching at the moment. If you teach a class wishing they were another group, you won't enjoy it – and nor will they!

My message to new teachers

Find out what it is about teaching that gives you a buzz – and focus on that. If nothing about teaching gives you a buzz, get another job.

My favourite language teaching anecdote

I was the learner. My French teacher said to me, 'Êtes-vous né en France?' (Were you born in France?) I *thought* she said 'Êtes-vous allé en France?' (Have you been to France?) So I said, 'Oui, trois fois.' (Yes, three times.)

English teaching is ...

like baking a cake when each cookery book has a different recipe and the ingredients are different each time you open the packet.

If I hadn't been a teacher, I would have been a ...

millionaire – maybe.

A question I would have liked *ETp* to ask me ...

Would you let your children go into *ELT*?

... and the answer ...

My son has just started a Linguistics and English Language course at university. Should I worry? Well, one thing I've learnt as a parent is that there is nothing whatsoever you can do to stop your offspring doing what they want to do – or to make them do something they don't want to do. And it does mean we can always have a good chat about glottal stops when we want to annoy the rest of the family.