

Editorial



Ken Milgate's article 'Talking rubbish', in which he suggests waste disposal as a fertile topic for creative writing and discussion, led me to thinking: What if the items being disposed of were unwanted English expressions, rather than unwanted household items and domestic appliances?

In his main feature, Charles Lowe asserts that there are many lexical chunks that are simply not useful for speakers of International English, or whose meanings are not immediately transparent, and he recommends that we don't teach them, focusing instead on language that they are more likely to understand and to use. So is it onto the scrapheap for expressions like *a different kettle of fish* or *it's no skin off my nose*? Or might such expressions, perhaps, become the victims of illegal fly-tipping? Might vocabulary items struck from the curriculum be spray-painted on walls by earnest logophiles, unwilling to see them entirely lost? How, if at all, could these expressions be disposed of properly? Might our students be asked to write creatively on the life story of a particular expression, describing how it proved useful in the past and why it has now been carelessly flung aside, abandoned at the side of the road like an old fridge? Might gangs of enthusiastic litter pickers attempt to prevent unwanted chunks of language from littering our linguistic landscape? And what then? Might recycling centres be set up where expressions no longer valued could be reused or 'upcycled' to give them new and trendy meanings?

One solution might be to make them castaways on a desert island, leaving them to start a new life in the sun or perhaps to be rescued by a passing boat. There are examples of

castaways who survived in the Scrapbook in this issue and, as usual, there is a photocopiable worksheet, this time with a slightly different take on the traditional 'What items would you take to a desert island' activity.

Elsewhere, Charlie Taylor celebrates the importance of enjoyment in foreign language learning, Nicoleta Nechita finds enjoyable ways to keep her young students fully engaged in their online lessons, and Gail Ellis and Sandie Mourão find the very best ways of enjoying picturebooks in young learner classrooms.

The November issue of *ETp* will be my last as its editor. After enjoying 21 years in the job, I think it is time to take a break and pursue some of my other interests. *ETp* will continue, though not in its present form, and more information about the future can be found on pages 26–27 and will be revealed in our next *ETp* issue.

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