

## PRELIM 3

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**Brazil: BRAZ-TESOL (BRAZ-  
TESOL Public School SIG)**

with

**Centre of English Studies**

August 2024

## Project background

Partnership overview		
<b>Course overview</b>	<b>ETA partner</b>	BRAZ-TESOL Public School SIG (Special Interest Group)
	<b>UKI partner</b>	Centre of English Studies
<b>User profile</b>	<b>Context overview</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> year High School Programme students. 2 x 45-50-minute English lessons per wk. Little opportunity to practise skills in a functional and meaningful context
	<b>Learner age group(s)</b>	15-16 years old
	<b>Curriculum overview</b>	Government provided coursebooks are used for the whole three years of English input. The resource packs support the first four units of these books which are covered in the first year. Coursebooks are provided but optional in use as decided by the teachers
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	<b>Resource format and organisation</b>	24 resource packs divided into three topic areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World of Work</li> <li>• Project Life</li> <li>• Technology &amp; Digital Culture</li> </ul> Each pack of eight has two lessons practising the following grammatical points from the coursebook. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imperatives</li> <li>• Present simple</li> <li>• Present continuous</li> <li>• Relative pronouns</li> </ul> Teachers have six lessons for each area of language in three different contexts to provide further practice of skills for their students
	<b>Resource content</b>	Each pack contains the running order for the lesson and the worksheets, games and links for the activities
	<b>Resource sustainability</b>	The resource packs are hosted on the BRAZ-TESOL website, in a special library area of the site <a href="#">BRAZ-TESOL SIG Library</a> Access and downloads are free for all including non-members The video of the launch event is also hosted on this page and explains how to use the materials as well as additional training on motivation and student engagement
<b>Course content</b>	<b>Methods</b>	A free, streamed launch event in Sao Paulo with key regional representatives. See website hosting above

	<b>Timeframe</b>	The dissemination will continue through BRAZ- TESOL Public School SIG throughout 2024
	<b>Number of teachers reached</b>	Due to national events and school year timings, (see Key Features below) the ETA is now promoting the materials across the country using all channels available to them. Data will be collected and shared with project stakeholders when available

## Description of the partners

**BRAZ-TESOL Public School Special Interest Group (SIG)** was created to support English teachers working across Brazil in public schools. One of their aims is to build a national community of practice. The SIG offers support and identifies key challenges for teachers in the public school system, which they then address through projects such as PRELIM. The volunteers of the SIG are passionate about building on and improving the work English teachers are doing across Brazil.

**Centre of English Studies** is an Irish owned group of schools with locations in Ireland, the UK and Canada, with over 40 years' experience of providing language courses to students from across the globe. Prelim 3 provided the opportunity to strengthen existing connections and friendships CES has with other organisations in Brazil and use the team's skills and expertise to help build a new partnership with BRAZ-TESOL.

## Key features of the context

Public high schools have up to 50-minute lessons of English twice a week, less in some regions of Brazil. The classes in the first year have a wide range of levels and skills in the language due to some attending private lessons outside of school. An average class size is 35-40 students. Government issued coursebooks are provided but teachers are not required to use them. The coursebook is used across three years of high school and the resources created were designed to support the first four units of the book practicing the key language elements. A key focus is engaging with low student motivation and engagement in language lessons.

Despite there being a range in the level of technology available in schools across the regions, all schools have internet access.

National elections in Brazil during the project had an impact on the timeframe of activities. The beginning of a new administration resulted in a period of change in key roles throughout the Ministry of Education during which little progress could be made, as awareness-raising and renewed permission-requests needed to be conducted. This has pushed the dissemination phase to the final weeks and will be continued subsequent to the project itself.

## Outline of the teacher support resource package, and rationale

The research stage began with a BRAZ-TESOL teacher members' needs analysis and focus group. The key areas of challenge highlighted were:

- limited time to cover material and prepare lessons
- student motivation
- student engagement.

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24 resource packs, divided into three topics, World of Work, Project Life and Technology and Digital Culture were designed to address these issues. Each pack has an engaging lesson focusing on practising and developing the students' language skills and building on the language introduced in the coursebook in a more functional and meaningful setting.

The resources are adaptable to the technology and facilities available to the teacher. The lessons are designed to be used in full, with the lesson plan and worksheets provided, for supplementing elements of a class using the games/activities or they can be set as homework tasks. A lesson may be taught over several lessons used as a resource selectively.

There should be a minimal amount of planning time required for each pack as a running order is provided. This provides planning assistance and allowing more time for the teacher to plan other aspects of the curriculum.

All the resources are hosted on the BRAZ-TESOL website and are free for teachers to download, this serves two purposes. Firstly, it allows the project to meet a much larger audience as anyone can access the materials and download them, there are no hard copies to disseminate. Secondly, by hosting the materials on the BRAZ-TESOL website and making them available to non-members of the organisation, it is hoped that it might encourage more teachers to join the organisation and participate in the numerous CPD events the organisation holds for teachers.

## Project findings

### Working in partnership

Having a small team formed of enthusiastic representatives from both organisations worked and the ideas and ambitions of the project fully supported. PRELIM is a rewarding and needed scheme for ETAs however, both from the perspective of the ETA and UKI, it is expected to be delivered alongside the individuals' additional responsibilities which in some areas was a limitation to the extent of the project.

The development of the resources within the small initial team was successful and BRAZ-TESOL's member teachers a valuable source for research purposes. It was relatively easy to decide on and produce the resource packs with few issues arising aside from tight timeframes and some technological problems with the material downloads.

From a dissemination perspective with a project of this scale, the focus shifted to the launch event and more time and effort was required to put this together. Both CES and BRAZ-TESOL are large organisations with specialised departments/individuals such as marketing and IT. The BRAZ-TESOL IT specialist was invaluable for creating the webpage and hosting the materials. However, other departments such as CES' marketing and sales team, could have been exploited much more to aid in promotional materials and documents had they been part of the initial team. Similarly, the finance manager from BRAZ-TESOL, as they would have had a better understanding of the project, allocated time specifically for the project and been able to provide support in a better capacity. With greater involvement of these stakeholders from an earlier stage, we would have been able to produce more professional promotional materials and exploited more contacts to advertise the launch event and the availability of the materials.

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## Learning points

- Resource creation and dissemination require different skill sets. Forming a team of individuals to work on the two different sides of the project would have made dissemination easier and produced a more professional result in some aspects.
- Having volunteer teachers help with the initial research stage was invaluable but inviting a small selection from this initial group to continue inputting and working on the project through to the end by providing an incentive would have provided consistency and been more efficient in obtaining feedback.

## Working with the CoP

There was excellent support from project management (NILE) in one-to-one meetings and by email. Communication with other UKIs was sporadic and perhaps there was sometimes a reluctance to put issues they were experiencing on the written record in Slack. However, the CoP meetings were always useful in terms of moral support and concrete ideas.

## Designing the teacher support resources

Designing materials for teachers that all have a slightly differing context to deliver lessons and addressing factors outside the scope of the project is challenging. The main example in this case being the restriction of only two, 50-minute lessons a week, less in some cases.

The initial needs analysis and focus group identified three issues:

- the time allocated for English
- motivating the students
- student engagement.

These were areas which could easily be addressed and although the number of hours available to teachers was out of our control, we were able to produce flexible resources to fit within differing timeframes.

Obtaining feedback from the public-school students proved challenging, but CES has many Brazilian students in our own schools and so this was taken advantage of where possible, but a larger cohort and more specific to the context may have been more impactful on the design process. However, we were able to confirm both the need and the appropriacy of the resources.

An important phase of feedback was with the BRAZ-TESOL Regional Reps. Their input highlighted that we had put the main focus on the grammatical aspect of the resources which led to a misunderstanding of their use and purpose. As a result we removed all references to the grammatical aspects and put the focus on the function and context of the language the same approach which CES uses in its syllabus. We also created a 'how to' guide for the teachers outlining the purpose of the resources and how to implement them effectively with their students.

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## Learning points

- The project has reinforced the importance of needs analyses, context, and relevance when it comes to maximising language learning and engagement in the classroom.
- Communicating effectively the purpose of resources to the stakeholder is paramount to the effective use and understanding of targeted resources.

## Disseminating the teacher support resources

The school year in South America runs very differently to the school year in Europe. This made dissemination more challenging as it didn't fit with the stages and timescale of the PRELIM project. With the added complication of a delayed start to the dissemination phases (see Key Features) it was challenging to make headway in the latter stages. As we reached the end of the project and partnership between the two organisations it was clear that in fact parts of the dissemination activities would occur post-project.

The launch event in February was a springboard for raising awareness. Encouraging busy teachers to engage in the project either at their busiest times or during their holidays was, perhaps, over-ambitious, but the resources are ready for further dissemination, and will be carried out by the BRAZ-TEASOL team. The data relating to this stage of the project will require later follow up.

## Learning points

- Plan the timeframe within the context it is to be delivered.
- Consider what input you need when and from whom and design a schedule around them.

## Monitoring and evaluating resource use

As outlined above the project has now reached the stage where a wider dissemination, trial and use of the resources has started. The BRAZ-TEASOL Public sig are attending conferences, visiting regional educational departments and going into schools where possible to promote the project and encourage teachers to download and use the materials. The benefit of hosting the resources on the website means that the number of downloads can be monitored long after the collaboration of CES and BRAZ-TEASOL has ended. It also means that specific regions where there was not much engagement with the resources can be targeted in the form of purposeful visits, conferences or social media avenues.

As dissemination continues, a Google form for teachers to provide feedback on individual lessons is available with each resource pack, along with a QR code for students to provide feedback via Survey Monkey. These will continue to be monitored and as the partnership ends, the continued development of the materials based on the feedback will still be possible using the data gathered as a result

## Learning points

- Finding an efficient way to obtain feedback from busy people is key.
- The scale of dissemination makes it challenging to monitor use in the same way a smaller cohort of teachers would.

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## Project outcomes

The result of the project was 24 resource packs with worksheets and guides that focused on putting grammatical aspects into contextualised situations that encouraged the students to practise their English in a more interactive way, increasing student motivation in the classroom.

74% of the BRAZ-TESOL members that trialled the pilot lessons liked the interactive aspect of the lesson. However, 84% of them felt that they didn't have enough time to fully utilize the materials due to the limited time allocated to English in public schools. Therefore, the guides suggested how to use the materials in the time allocated as a supplement to the curriculum the teachers were required to cover.

Feedback provided by the BRAZ-TESOL representatives also confirmed we had achieved our aim.

*'Our evaluation of the material reveals its effectiveness in imparting foundational knowledge in general English. The content features well-crafted listening tasks that showcase diverse accents and individuals from varied contexts, providing students with a rich and engaging learning experience. The themes presented are thoughtfully chosen and prove to be captivating for discussions among young learners.'*

They did however, focus more on the delivery of the content using CLIL and the match to the BNCC (Secondary level of Instruction) which the public system follows. This was never the purpose of the materials and it highlighted the need for the resource packs to include clear guidelines on how to use them as an aid to help with student engagement and lesson prep rather than as a tool for delivering the curriculum.

*'While the material offers valuable insights, it's noteworthy that the national exam demands a specific set of skills not fully addressed by the current content. The material's strengths lie in preparing students for real-world language use, but additional consideration may be needed for aligning with the specific requirements of university entry exams.'*

### Learning points

- Accompany resources with a clear guide on the objective, aim and purpose of the materials not just how to deliver them.
- Feedback needs to be analysed from different perspectives. While at first glance it seems negative, a different perspective on the context the feedback has been provided from might be the key to what is missing rather than it not being successful in achieving your aim.

## Emergent learning

As already stated, this project was two halves, material creation and dissemination. The focus was always about teacher input on the resources when actually for a country the size of Brazil we also needed input from them on how to disseminate the resources. Sustainability of the resources was a key factor of this project and the need for them to stand alone without external support. The library created on the website with the accompanying video we felt met this criteria.

However, the idea to hold a launch the event, hosted free online as a CPD event was less successful. Attendance was low and reports suggest that this was due to it taking place at the beginning of the school year when other priorities were evident for the teachers. Returning back to the learning point of selecting a small cohort of teachers to trial and work with on this project, we could have

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also asked them for their input in the dissemination of the resources. The resources are for them and so they should be able to offer their perspective on how to disseminate them effectively.

#### Learning point

- Teacher input was not just needed for the resource design but also for a more effective method of dissemination.